The Philosophy of Religion

LOTZE

CONYBEARE

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OUTLINES

OF A

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

BY

HERMANN LOTZE

EDITED BY F. C. CONYBEARE, M.A

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PREFACE BY THE EDITOR.

I HAVE completed and venture to publish the following translation of Herman Lotze's "Lectures upon the Philosophy of Religion" in the same hope in which it was undertaken by my late wife, that it may be of use to some who cannot read the German original, and yet desire a concise statement of the form in which one of the clearest-minded of our later thinkers put to himself those great questions—as to the origin and destiny of the spirit of man, as to life in general and the meaning of the material universe—which occupy us all at some time or another, many of us as soon as we have won food and shelter for our bodies.

The date, October, 1882, at which I find my wife began this task, soon pushed aside to make way for her translation of Scherer's "History of German Literature," resumed after a while, but at the last left unfinished, recalls the movement in favour of church reform which was then astir in Oxford, and in which she felt a keen interest. Of that movement during its brief continuance Arnold Toynbee was the life and soul, and he it was who by his earnestness and enthusiasm kindled in others sympathy with a scheme which, in its leading particulars, alas! had but little chance of success. Toynbee wished that the English Church might become in fact, what it is in theory, the very nation itself in a religious aspect. He saw and valued the actual comprehensiveness of the Church,

which more than any professed sect permits in its clergy a variety of belief and ritual practice; but he dreamed of its becoming still more comprehensive, and aimed at such a reform as would make simple piety and missionary zeal, rather than willingness to subscribe the thirty-nine articles, the condition of serving in its ministry.

It may be that Toynbee's enthusiasm and entire devotion to the highest that he knew hid from him the strength of easily aroused prejudices, and led him to regard his ideal as easier of achievement than we know it to be. Any attempt to liberalise theological opinion in a hurry would, in this as in any other country, provoke a dangerous reaction. The change must come from within the Church and not from without; and there are signs that, in the University of Oxford itself, influences are at work which cannot fail in time to bring about a complete revolution in churchmen's ways of looking at things. If we compare the latest volume of orthodox apologetic, the essays upon the Lux Mundi, full of fervour and enthusiastic welcome for the newest critical results of science, of history, and of philosophy, if we compare this with the lifeless thaumaturgy which was Paley's notion of Christianity, we may almost hope that after another hundred years the new flesh underneath will be fully formed, that the old cicatrix of miracles and thirty-nine articles will drop away and the standpoint of the average churchman become the same as that which is to-day Dr. Martineau's. Professor Goldwin Smith used to deplore the exclusion of all except ordained members of the English Church from the

richly-endowed Oxford Chairs of Theology, of Hebrew, and of Ecclesiastical History; it would, however, be far more deplorable, if these restrictions were prematurely removed; for the result would be that future clergymen, instead of coming to Oxford to study theology, as at present, would flock to provincial seminaries, from which they would issue as ignorant of all critical developments in religious philosophy and history, as fanatically opposed to liberalising influences, and as thoroughly impregnated with priestly nonsense of all sorts, as are young priests fresh from the College of Saint Sulpice. We may well be content with the rate at which opinion is at present developing. Barely a generation back we were all for harassing Bishop Colenso because of his work on the Pentateuch. To-day it is only the Rev. Mr. Foulkes, and the venerable Archdeacon of Taunton, and other lovers of the past, who are so sure of their dogmatic position as to bring charges of heresy against devout and learned men more open-minded than themselves.

It is in my heart to speak a few words about the beautiful and happy life of her to whom is to be ascribed any merit which this little work may seem to have; not because that life was in any way eventful or beyond the ordinary, but simply because in the quiet zeal for the good of others and in the undemonstrative pursuit of knowledge which marked all its phases, not girlhood only but married life as well, it was typical of the life which happily lies within the reach of many English women. Her parents lived during her early childhood in the High Street, in Oxford, and even the local associations of a home

over-shadowed by Magdalen Tower and surrounded by ancient colleges and libraries, within which the intellectual life of the past is ever being gathered up and ever quickens to new birth, may have helped to give to Emily Mary Müller the intellectual seriousness and love of books which she soon displayed. Not that she was not as merry in her play as other children, and a classical playground too was hers: in spring and autumn the old physic garden with its quaint nooks, inviting games of hide and seek, and in winter the sunny path beneath Merton College Garden, where the old city wall and bulwarks drink in any southern warmth and fender off the north wind, and in summer the shady banks and *pleasances* of the Lower Cherwell. Later on she was sent to the Oxford High School for girls, just started on its useful career under the guidance of Miss Benson, a teacher who had the gift of imbuing her pupils with her own lofty sense of duty and love of truth. Miss Benson had what are called high-church views, which, without the least propagandist efforts on her part, could not fail to repeat themselves in those with whom she was in daily contact. My wife had been brought up to be a member of the Church of England, but, apart from that, her natural seriousness, her sense of Miss Benson's strength of character, and her love for her as for one who took a deep interest in her and was ever kind and anxious to teach her, all combined to make her for a time very religious in a high-church fashion. But such a phase could not last long for a mind so active and enquiring as hers. Her dogmatic repose, she once told me, was broken by her reading

her father's Hibbert lectures on the "Origin and Growth of Religion," a work full of light and suggestiveness, though it may well be doubted whether even in philosophers, much less in primitive men, religion arises out of the perception of a spurious philosophical infinity.[1]

There followed the inevitable reaction, and during the last three years of her all too brief life, she could not bring herself to go to church. She said that she could not herself repeat, and, such was her sincerity, she would not pretend before others to repeat creeds full of historical propositions, some of which are demonstratively false, while others rest on the thinnest and poorest evidence. The creed of which she was most tolerant was the so-called Athanasian, because its clauses, for the most part, neither admit of nor claim historical proof, and have also an interest for the student of thought, as the final and subtlest spinning out of a cobweb of speculation, which, through Philo Judæus and Saint John, links the Timæus of Plato with later ages.

Shortly before her marriage, which was in 1883, my wife had begun the rather arduous task of translating, for the use of English readers, Scherer's "History of German Literature," and she did not get through with it before the end of 1885. Not only did she manage the rendering of it with so much skill that reviewers paid her the compliment of saying that it read like an English book rather than as a translation,

[1] Compare, for example, Professor Max Müller's first lecture on the "Origin and Growth of Religion" with Hegel's "Logic." Sect. 94.

but her good judgment shown in compressing the original, and in excising patriotic effusions, which were superfluous for English readers, was also very much praised.

In 1882 my future wife took my place on the Committee of the Oxford branch of the Charity Organisation Society, and of this she continued to be an indefatigable member to the last. The work of visiting the poor was thoroughly congenial to her, and she knew how to sympathise with them in their wants and difficulties; how to advise and help them without patronising them. For the belief in the brotherhood and equality of men is very easy to entertain and air as a drawing-room conviction, but it is difficult to approach those of humbler station than oneself, so as to make them feel that one is really their friend and equal. Perhaps she was the more successful in winning the hearts and confidence of the poor, because, unlike some ladies who take up district visiting, she had no ulterior motive for her charitable visits, no anxiety to get her people to go to church, or to belong to the Primrose or to any other political league. In this work, as in all her relations with others, she was absolutely simple and true. For my wife had, what I may call, the true republican temperament, and valued people, not for their wealth or rank, but solely for what they were in themselves; and this was the principle on which she chose her friends and acquaintances.

After her marriage her life flowed serenely and happily as before, and she declared that the world seemed far better arranged than as a

girl she had thought it to be. One sorrow befel us shortly after our union, the death of my father; a loss which she felt very deeply. My eldest sister, whose name was also Mary, had died not long before, having really killed herself by overwork among the poor of the East End. All the tenderer perhaps, on this account was the feeling with which my father welcomed my wife into his family circle.

Notwithstanding my father's generosity to us at the time of our marriage, still, after his death, in 1884, we naturally had more money to spend than before, and it was no small pleasure to be able to indulge her generous intentions towards others. There are many who still remember her kindness in these and other ways; and she had, too, the gift—which is far rarer and less of an accident than the being able to give—the *manner*, namely, in giving, which, far from humbling or mortifying those who receive, disarms them at once, because it assures them that they are being helped from the purest motive of sympathy. The reason was that she valued money simply as a means of doing good to others, as a trust and responsibility which she was privileged to fulfil. Towards her relatives she was especially liberal, and just before her death she was anxious—had it been feasible—to give away her entire patrimony in order to secure the future happiness of a near relative of her father's.[1]

[1] Her husband was happy in being able, shortly after her death, to achieve this object, so dear to her, by resigning in favour of Prof. Max Müller the claims which, by his marriage settlements, he possessed upon the latter's estate.

In all things, and especially in the management of her household, she was very painstaking and methodic, and so it was that, after her marriage, she found time to make herself proficient in Greek, and she threw herself at once into the study of Plato, with an almost childish freshness of delight.

But this life of quiet well-doing, of patient self-culture, and serene affection, was not to last for long; and in the summer of 1886, after a few days of suffering, which it is very painful to look back upon, she died at the seaside at Southwold. Almost her last gaze was upon the sunlit sea, studded with white sails. But her dear body, the vehicle of so gentle and sincere a soul, they brought reverently back to the Oxford home, and laid it to rest in that happy cemetery of Holiwell, which looks towards the Cherwell and the riverside meadows, which she loved so much.

"ἐπ ' ε ὐχαριστίᾳ τοῦ εἰρηνοποιοῦ θεοῦ."

OUTLINES

OF A

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION.

I.

Three Views of Religion as (1) Part of Philosophy, (2) Independently revealed by Faith, (3) Psychological Error.

Could religious truth be fully apprehended by the human reason, philosophy would be the only means of establishing and expounding it. On the other hand, even though it could not be found out by reason, but required an external or internal revelation, it would still lie with philosophy to show how the truth so revealed was connected with our conception of the world, as we know it apart from revelation, and also with our needs and duties. One other view must be considered, namely the sceptical one, according to which religion is no more than a subjective error on our part, which can be ex-

plained by reference to the natural history of the soul. This latter view can hardly be intelligibly stated, until we have learned from philosophy what is true about the supersensuous world. Until then we cannot possibly hope to show how the soul's processes and modes of operation must inevitably miss the truth or distort it. And even then the history of how an idea or conviction grows up within us can never by itself be an adequate criterion of its truth or falsehood.

This then is the task which awaits us. First of all we must find out how much the unaided reason can tell us about the supersensuous world; and then we must in the second place set ourselves to discover how far the matter and contents of a religious revelation agree with these fundamental principles, and, lastly, we must add a critical account of the errors which may arise in connection with each point.

II.

Religious Faith not the same as Acceptance of Axioms of Science.

The claims of philosophy to determine what is true and what is false in religion are usually met with an appeal to faith as the peculiar organ of religious truth.

And the objection is even pressed home, until it takes the form of claiming that the whole mass of demonstrative processes, science itself not excepted, rests upon faith, because it presupposes the acceptance of certain first principles, which neither are capable of nor need further proof.

But the immediate acceptance of its axioms by science is something quite different from what religion means by faith; and the difference lies in the nature of the contents held to be true in the two cases. The axioms of science are general judgments, and are hypothetical. They do not narrate or assert that anything is or has happened, but only assert that if something were to happen it must necessarily correspond with certain conditions. But the first principles of religion, and those which constitute its essence, from which we must of course exclude moral principles, are assertorial judgments, or dogmatic statements which assert the reality of particular single facts, such as the existence of God, the creation of the world, etc., —facts which, in spite of their wide scope, are yet particular.

Or of Moral Principles.

Now, these universal laws just express the essence of reason, its own true nature and the

reaction which it perpetually exerts on the impressions which reach it. This reaction is at first unconscious, but later on, when reason comes to reflect upon its activities, it brings them before consciousness in the form of principles. Naturally, then, it cannot get rid of these—for they are the very ways in which from its nature it must operate—but regards them as the ultimate truth. But it is different with religious assent, for this refers to and has to do with particular facts which have nothing to do with the intrinsic nature of the individual spirit. And, therefore, religious assent must justify itself upon other grounds, and it is not enough to compare it with the certainty which on evidence we repose in the first principles of science. The two things are not alike.

III.

Religious Faith grows out of Primitive Feelings more akin to first Impressions of Sense than to Rationalised Experience of a Cosmos.

Another comparison would be nearer the mark. Knowledge arises not from the general laws alone, but also from the immediate perception which first puts before us instances of the working of these laws. Now, a perception of sense,

say of light, can neither be called in question nor confirmed. For us such a perception ranks as an immediate and convincing reality. But besides the sensuous affections, which arise in us from outside incentives, we can imagine the existence of impressions directly wrought in upon our souls, perhaps by divine power; and of these perceptions, as of sensuous ones, the direct purport must be recognised as the full reality.

We can quite admit that religious knowledge thus originated; only we must carry the comparison a step further. Sensuous perceptions are by themselves nothing more than subjective emotions of our own selves or conditions of feeling. They only become statements about an outward reality and about the properties and relations of things, when they have been combined and compared by our reason, and on the basis of these general laws have been expounded as signs or symbols of a cosmic order. The same remark applies to those impressions of a divine order; they would at first be only emotions of the mind, attitudes of longing, of devotion, or enthusiasm, the reality of which cannot of course be doubted, although by them-

selves they represent no truth whatever of faith, or only do so when our reason has connected them with our theory of the universe from other points of view, and has proved that these inward emotions can only be comprehended on the assumption of certain facts, which form a desirable and proper filling in of gaps and flaws in our knowledge, a supplement not accessible, however, to reason alone, but which reason must admit into its theory of the universe.

Primitive Religious Feeling implies a Supersensuous World.

IV.

This inward experience may be termed the faith with which we believe and through which we believe, the *fides qua creditur*, by which I mean that upon nothing short of these spiritual emotions can we base our confidence in the significance and truth of that supersensuous agency which we presupposed. But the matter and content of such faith as this cannot assume the definite form of articles of religion communicable by one person to another, until reason has set to work upon it, and has investigated the problem: how the causes and

Which is also implied by Science, Art, and Morality.

import of these inward emotions of the soul cohere with the rest of experience. This is none the less necessary, because articles of faith already formulated by tradition or scholastic revelation are offered to us for acceptance. For the conviction of their truth in turn can only be called forth in us by proof of their rational connection with our other intellectual postulates. Hence, our first task must be to show that our intelligence is driven by its theoretical, æsthetic, and moral demands to furnish a certain supplement to its view of the world of experience in the shape of an assumption of a supersensuous world. The human mind has endeavoured to supply such supplementary hypotheses one after another in a certain order, and to them will correspond the successive chapters of the Philosophy of Religion. We will take them in order and begin with that in which all else centres, namely, the existence of God.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

V.

What Proofs of God's Existence really Prove.

ENQUIRIES about the existence of God have generally taken the form of proofs that He exists. But in this case we cannot say that there is any established nominal definition of God to form the basis of these proofs. Rather, owing to the various points of view from which the question is looked at, the very nature of God is determined by those same proofs which are only intended to establish the fact of His existence. We must, therefore, regard all these proofs as so many attempts to explain the underlying ground connecting antecedent and consequent in certain formulæ to which we must resort when we would interpret in words the obscure impulse which drives us to pass in our thought—as we cannot help passing—from the world given in sense to a world not

given in sense, but above and behind sense. It is this underlying ground which justifies our saying, for example, that, if there be a many, there must also be a one; if a transitory, then also an eternal being; if a conditioned, then also an unconditioned. More than this, it is self-evident and follows from what we have said, that one cannot prove the existence of God from premises, as if it were a necessary consequence of them. For no premises could be allowed to be true anterior to this highest of all premises which gives to all realities their title to exist. Therefore, all proofs that God exists are pleas put forward in justification of our faith and of the particular way in which we feel that we must apprehend this highest principle.

VI.

Ontological Proof. God is Perfect, Perfection involves Existence, therefore God Exists.

The ontological proof of the existence of God runs in its scholastic form as follows. Other things than God need not exist, simply because they are thought of, but they are first thought of, and then their existence is supplied to them from without. But this is not the case with an all-

perfect being; for such a being includes, among his other perfections, the predicate of reality, and would contradict himself, if he did not. Of the positions here laid down, the latter is true, and the former false; for the idea or notion of any finite being involves the predicate of reality and of existence as much or as little as the notion of an infinite being involves it. The idea of an animal, for instance, would contradict itself, if, at the same time that we combine in it the other marks of its class, we leave out the thought of a subject really existing and supporting it, a subject of which alone it can in its entirety be enunciated. But, supposing we do comprise in our notion of an animal the notion of its existing, what do we gain? Surely no more than a notion which is free indeed from self-contradiction, but as to which it can still be asked, whether the reality which *can* be attributed to it must necessarily be attributed to it.

Kant's Criticism of this Proof.

Such was the reasoning by which Kant shewed this so-called proof to be unsound. If you would prove this additional reality of your conception, you must give up talking about any inner contradiction arising in the notion of the highest being, in case

you omit it; what you must attend to is the outward contradiction with other admitted facts, which the assumption that this highest being does not really exist would involve.

Anselm's Form of this Proof: God is Real, because He is "id quo majus, Cogitari nequit."

And this is the meaning which we attach to the older form of the proof as we find it in Anselm. If on the one hand we think of that than which a greater cannot be conceived—*id quo majus Cogitari nequit*—, yet on the other hand think of it as unreal, then *this* thought of as real will still be something greater than it is when we think of it as not real. This was Anselm's proof, and it is worth as little as the other. Still without meaning to do so, it very nearly embodies a truth of a kind. For it says nothing expressly about God, but only about that which need not be a being at all, but may equally well be an event, a world-order, or what not. Moreover, the predicate *majus* which we have translated *greater*, indicates in a vague manner the totality of all attributes expressive of excellence, the totality, for example, of what is beautiful, good, exalted, and holy. Now, Anselm found it to be a contradiction in terms that this content, whether being or events, for he does not

Anselm's Form Merely Expresses our Natural Impulse towards the Supersensuous.

determine the mode of its existence, should have no existence or real validity at all. To him the assumption that it does not exist seemed to conflict with that immediate conviction of its reality, which all our theoretic, æsthetic, and moral activities constrain our souls to entertain. As a proof, therefore, of the existence of God, his argument was weak enough; and yet it expresses what is an immediate fact about our minds, namely that impulse which we experience towards the supersensuous, and that faith in its truth which is the starting-point of all religion. A proof of God's existence it is not, and on two grounds: firstly, it has not the force of a conclusion based on premises: and secondly, that of which it would prove the existence need not necessarily take the form of a being at all, still less the form of a personal being.

VII.

The Cosmological Proof. A World which is Conditioned implies an Unconditioned, *viz.* God.

It is difficult to formulate in a proper manner the cosmological proof, which argues from the fact, that there exists in the world conditioned beings and events, which have not in themselves the ground

and basis of their reality, to an unconditioned and necessary first principle. This principle, it is supposed, must be the most real of all beings, and must have in itself the ground and basis of its existence.

One must, before doing anything else, define the particular ideas used in this proof. By the term necessary, then, we mean generally no more than this: that something has its truth or existence based on the truth or existence of something else in accordance with a general law. Some propositions we call necessary to thought, meaning that we cannot think them otherwise; and these must admit of ultimate reference to the most general truths, which are necessary because they depend on nothing higher and more general than themselves. These highest truths we are accustomed to call unconditionally necessary, as if necessity and absence of conditions were one and the same thing. But it is a mistake to speak in this way, and we ought rather to say of these highest truths that they are merely unconditionally valid. For the fact of the matter is that our spiritual or intellectual nature, as now constituted, forces us in thinking to admit these truths. Our re-

But Absence of Conditions not Necessity, but only Matter of Fact.

cognition of these truths is therefore necessary as a result of our intellectual nature, but this nature itself is a simple matter of fact for which no reason can be given.

Or if we feel obliged to regard it too as a necessary result of something else, this something else, or, anyhow, the ultimate principle accountable for things, will no doubt be unconditioned, but not in itself necessary. It is only our admission of it which will be necessary, and that because it conditions our very selves. In a word then, if there be a conditioned, that is to say, a necessary existence, there must also be an unconditioned existence, and the latter will not be necessary, but simply actual, and its admission or recognition will be a necessity for us, just because it is actual.

Therefore by this Proof God is not Necessary, though our Belief in Him may be so.

VIII.

Nor is it convenient to mix up with this proof the idea of what is accidental. An accident is the opposite of what is purposive. When we are realising an aim or purpose by the use of means, we find that our means never ex-

Is the World so Accidental as to Require an Absolute Ground?

Right Meaning of Accident.

actly suit our end, and no more, but that they have other properties as well which make no difference so far as our end goes, but which being there cannot be prevented from taking such effect as they are capable of. Such a side-result or effect is what we mean by an accident. And it is the same with regard to a general law; there are particular features in the effect which follows the law, which, though not opposed to the law, are yet not results of it, but are produced by, and are simply due to, the peculiar nature of the object or condition of things to which the law is applied. Such features in the effect as these are accidental. And, therefore, we ought to give on the whole this sense to the word accidental. The accidental is as such a not-necessary factor in the fulfilment of an aim or in the consequences which follow from a law, or in the development of the nature of a being. An accident comes to pass in the connected course of events, but is due to some circumstances which have nothing to do either with the purpose or law or nature in question.

One cannot therefore speak of an accident except with reference to a systematic train of

events, with the main drift of which the accident in question, though it emerges among them, has yet nothing to do. Apart from this drift its reality is necessary; it must be, because like everything else it has causes and conditions on which it depends.

If, however, we assume an ultimate event which has no ulterior conditions at the back of itself, it will be real simply as a matter of fact, and far from being itself necessary, only its admission or recognition by us will be so necessary.

IX.

If Unconditioned means Matter of Fact.

But such a qualification of the proof as this deprives it of all the cogency which it seemed to possess. So long as one thinks that one can start from a conditioned and arrive at an unconditioned being, which is also necessary, one seems to have in the latter predicate arrived at a condition which must be fulfilled by anything occupying the lofty post of supreme principle. And thus people came to think that the final term of this progress, which starts from the conditioned world below, must be a being more real than anything else,

and somehow or other uniting in itself all kinds of perfection. But so soon as we see that a thing is not necessary, because it is unconditioned, but is a mere matter of fact, we at once lose sight of the clue which guided our thought.

Everything, big or little, humble or exalted, may be an absolute matter of fact, so long as it does not contradict itself. On the other hand, we cannot help recognising as actual fact whatever is evident to us in a direct and undeniable perception, or whatever follows from such a perception as the necessary explanation of it.

If we turn it in this way, the cosmological proof leads to quite another result than the intended; it leads straight to the pluralistic view of natural science. By this is meant that science assumes, as facts absolutely given and underlying nature, a plurality of fixed and unchangeable and at the same time ultimate subjects, whether elements, atoms, or beings, and assumes along with them a movement and interaction among them which never had a beginning. Any of these assumptions we can make without contradicting ourselves.

Then Cosmological Proof leads to Pluralistic View of Natural Science.

The many beings in the world may just as well have always existed as exist now. They could not now exist and move if in doing so they in any way contradicted or came into conflict with reality. And more than this, we must, to begin with at least, postulate both plurality and movement of the elements of the world; for one cannot see how a plurality ever arose out of a single principle, no matter what it be, unless various conditions influencing it from without constrained it to produce here *a* and there *b* or *c*. Equally little can we conceive that the movements of the several elements ever began; for in that case we must postulate a previous cause to explain why those movements began at one time rather than another.

Religious Motive of this Proof is to Represent God as Adequate to Produce the World.

Thus far we have not come in sight of what is the real motive which prompts a religious mind to follow this train of thought. It is this, that granted a highest principle must not only not contradict itself, but be also necessary to our understanding things, we must still add to these demands of theory one other demand, namely, that of all the conceivable principles which satisfy these formal postulates, that one alone ought to be

recognised as the really highest principle, which by the sweep and grandeur of its scope proves its title to occupy this supreme position.

X.

The third or teleological proof is to the following effect: experience presents the world to us as a system of means adapted to ends. Such adaptation is a proof of the wisdom of a personal supreme being who sustains the world. The first objection we can raise to this argument is the general one, that systematic adaptation in the sense implied cannot be detected by experience. All we can really observe is the fact that the material objects, and their movements as presented to us, so agree among themselves, that supposing we choose to term what results from them their end, then this so-called end finds in these material objects and movements means exactly sufficient to have brought it into existence. But what ground have we to call this result an end to be attained? Why not regard it as merely the necessary outcome of the conditions?

Teleological Proof. World exhibits Design, therefore, there was an All-wise Designer, *viz.* God.

Objection: the World exhibits Adaptation, but not Necessarily Design.

Have we any right to regard it as an end, unless we can prove that the combination of circumstances before us is quite unintelligible as a mere result of previous and aimless conditions? And this can never be proved in regard to any event in the world in a logically satisfactory manner. For even where we presuppose ends or purposes to exist, we never dream of supposing that these realise themselves unaided. On the contrary they presuppose in order to their realisation such a system of independently existing means as must, although operating without purpose and in accordance with general laws, perforce issue in that which as end was intended to be. We cannot therefore ever thoroughly confute one who declares that the whole course of the world is a blind and inevitable result of a given necessary combination of circumstances and things, and who, therefore, denies that we have any right to believe in the presence therein of design, unless we have direct evidence of it through our senses. In any case, such adaptation and design can never be proved by the analysis of any combination whatever of actual facts.

XI.

It will be answered, no doubt, that our attempt to explain the facts as a case of adaptation of means to end was not arbitrary at all. Nature, it will be argued, at large, and also various of her particular creatures are so stamped with the characteristics of design as to leave us no choice. The very adjustment of creatures to one another and the wonderful harmony of their internal structure compel us to see in them the work of design.

Design implies Choice, and was there Choice?

We may admit that there is such a harmony, and yet we must at the same time agree that it only renders the argument to design on the part of the creator probable, but not necessary. In the case of an organism which fulfils an end we can always make the contrary assumption, at any rate in theory. We can never be certain that it was not by a series of undesigned events that the elements composing such an organised structure chanced together into that form. We can never be quite sure that there was any choice about it, or that they were not impelled by

necessity to produce the structure in question. Nor is this all: the very probability of design to which we would fain cling in such cases rests on a bit of circular reasoning. If we begin by presupposing design as the regular cause of a certain class of effects, any examples in which such effects are reached without the usual design being at work will strike us as exceptions to a rule and as improbable. But let us avoid making any such assumption, let us be careful not to regard the world as dependent on a purpose, and we at once cut away under our feet the grounds we had for thinking it improbable that means should conform to ends in the world without the presence of design. The argument from design really rests on the strange and unaccountable belief, that what is without purpose, perverse and irrational, has a better title in itself to exist, or is more likely, as such, to be real than what is not so. If we are possessed by such a belief we must needs suppose a particular and peculiar purpose to have been at work in order that anything which is rational and thus fulfils an end should be real. There is, how-

The Argument from Design is a Circular One.

And Rests on the Absurd Belief that the Real is more likely to be Irrational than not.

ever, nothing to prevent our making just the opposite assumption. For we must in any case recognise in reality something which is final and absolute, and cannot be derived from anything else; and since we must recognise and admit such an ultimate reality, why not suppose that in its original character it is entitled to these predicates of harmony, inner agreement, and adjustment of means to end?

XII.

Does the World Argue Supreme Wisdom on Part of its Creator?

We began by taking for granted that the world is an harmonious whole. But now we have to remember in the first place, that there is nothing to justify us in using superlatives; as we do, when we speak of the supreme adaptation of means to end revealed in Nature, and argue from that to a supreme wisdom on the part of a creator. We only know the world which is, but not those worlds which might have been; any one of which, so far as we know, might have been very much fairer than our own. But, apart from that, we cannot approve of the modern way of thinking which pooh-poohs that outward ad-

justment of things to one another upon which popular theology chiefly relies in proof of divine wisdom, and yet, at the same time that it does so, attaches great value to another kind of adaptation, namely to an immanent conformity of means to end, and believes that living beings in particular, instead of being mere functions of their environment, are self-ends which maintain and realise themselves by means of their own intrinsic powers. This latter kind of conformity to ends or of adaptation is most easily affiliated to the common doctrine that the world is a purposeless mechanism. As a matter of fact, the modern view may be correct, that in the course of Nature, and without the working of any design, a great number of forms were produced which were ill-adjusted, either as regards their inner forces or their outward conditions; and that those which had the luck to be well adjusted have alone survived, and so appear to us to have been chosen designedly out of a number of possible ones. But we cannot be sure of this doctrine, unless we are sure that what is inharmonious and perverse has been excluded from reality; whereas the many evils

Neither Modern Belief in Immanent Design nor Old Belief in Externally Impressed Design Prove such Wisdom.

and forms of sickness and decay, which beset the regular development of any organism, show only too plainly that Nature impartially produces what is full of flaws no less than what is suited to the end, and only does not preserve her imperfect productions because they contradict themselves. A structure may, therefore, betray an indwelling adaptation of means to end, and yet this decides nothing about the causes which produced the structure. On the other hand, the doctrine that there is a process of outside adaptation, by which various parts which seem independent were adjusted to one another in the course of their formation and development, at least allows us to infer that the principle, which generated them all, is one and the same; for it renders it very improbable that several independent principles should have co-operated. That inference could never be rigidly drawn, however, and remains a mere probability until we can show that such external adaptation pervades the entire world; and we can show nothing of the kind, for not only is our knowledge limited, but what we actually do know, namely the numerous cases in which

The World rather Resembles the Work of many Conflicting and Unwise Principles.

things destroy each other, militates against any such view. The conclusion is that the facts on which the teleological proof is usually based prove nothing of the kind. They prove either no more than that given elements, forces, and laws are unconditionally real and actual, which is the ordinary view of science—or, if they prove more than that, they point to a polytheistic view, according to which there exist *several* purposes and ends to which things are adapted, which purposes taken collectively are compatible with one another, though in their various domains they do not prevent one thing from attacking and destroying another.

XIII.

Moral Form of Cosmological Proof Argues from Badness of World to a Good God.

There is another way of putting the cosmological proof, which infers from the character of the world as given in experience. This other way we shall presently consider. Meanwhile we may dismiss the *moral proof* with a few words. This proof argues that, as in this world there is such a lack of true proportion of reward to merit, there must be a supreme ethical principle which is willing and able to bring about such a pro-

portion. This proof has its force for the heart of man, but for his intellect it is a bit of circular reasoning. If we are already persuaded as a matter of fact that God exists, we can fairly regard the course of the world, so far as it answers not to the goodness and justice which we attribute to Him, as incomplete, and can supplement experience by belief in a system of compensation which will bring it into harmony with God. But supposing there be *no* God, then we may have reason indeed for *wishing* the world were otherwise than on earth it is, but we cannot think it theoretically necessary that it should be otherwise. It may be as revolting as it likes, and yet not cease to be real on that account.

XIV.

A Proof of God Must Start not from the Fact of Purposive Action in Things which is Doubtful but of Bare Action which is Not.

The teleological proof failed because the principle chosen as its starting-point—though an empirical one—could not be shown to be actually true over a sufficiently wide area. Perhaps we may succeed better if we choose another simpler starting-point which permits of no such uncertainty. Instead of starting from

purposive action, let us start from the bare fact of action on the part of things. We think it can not be disputed that the world's course cannot be conceived of without assuming that things *act* upon one another. In other words the changes, to which some of these things are liable, are conditions which bring about in others of them certain changes. In short, one thing regulates its action by another. Let us then ask: What are the conditions under which this can take place? And in answering this question we shall not so much be discovering a *procedure* (in the sense in which the Holy Ghost *proceeds* from the other two persons) with which to supplement the idea of action in order to render it intelligible, as be merely analysing our *notion* of action, and bringing out clearly presuppositions all along involved therein, though we were not sufficiently conscious of them and of their importance.

XV.

It Must Start from Four Fundamental Assumptions of Natural Science.

Natural Science in its view of the world starts from certain fundamental assumptions, which are these:

1. There is some one or other *matter-of-fact*,

which, we must admit, is eternal, and which is ultimately *real* without deriving from anything else.

2. This reality must be regarded according as *experience* teaches us that we must regard it, if we would give any explanation of it at all.

3. Experience teaches us that there is a, for us, undefinable number of real elements equally independent on, and irreducible to, one another. Nor are these at rest, but we must assume that they have always been in motion—a motion no less real than themselves.

4. There are universal *laws of nature* which determine what *results* shall flow from the relations into which these elements from time to time enter into with one another, and these laws weld the several elements together into one coherent system or world.

Interaction According to Law all over the World Argues some Identity or Community of Every Part with Every Other.

In view of the unquestioning acceptance of these principles by natural philosophers, we must ask upon what the authority of these laws and the allegiance paid to them by things depends. Evidently, every law will be in form a hypothetical judgment of the following shape: if the two elements, A and B, meet in a

relation, C, then a change must take place in both, according to which A becomes a, B becomes b, and lastly, C c. Before such a law can apply, the elements, and their mutual relation to which it is to apply, must be capable of being regarded as *kinds* of A, B, and C, and of being ranked under them as such. There must, therefore, be some point of similarity between all the elements which make up a coherent world outside of which no part falls, and on which no part is entirely without effect. These elements cannot, therefore, exist each of them without any reference to the rest, but their natures must have so much in common, or be so far adjusted to one another, that they can figure as terms of a series, or, anyhow, of a system of series, in such wise that we can pass from the nature of any one to the nature of any other through a certain number of steps all taken within the system. In no other way is it possible that in every case in which two elements meet in a definite relation, a *perfectly definite* result should follow to the exclusion of any other, and this possibility *every* scientific view of the world presupposes. If the opposite were the case, if two elements were wholly dissimilar, one conse-

quence might attach to them as much or as little as another, and a uniform connection of events would be impossible.

This is the first limitation on which we must insist of the pluralism to which, when we assumed an indefinite number of elements, there seemed no limit. It does not follow from this that all things had their *origin* in a common source. For the constitution of the elements of the world, as we have just defined it, can be recognised as an unconditioned primary fact just as well as any other.

XVI.

In the foregoing has been exhibited the condition which things must fulfil in order to be *able* to follow any law at all; but we have not explained how they *actually* come to obey laws. It is usual to speak of the *supremacy* which laws exercise over things, but, in so speaking, we explain neither the obedience of the latter to laws, nor the power with which laws can compel.

A Law of Nature is no Outside Power Controlling Reality, but either a Mere Bye-law of the Intelligence, or an Expression of the Intrinsic Activity of a Thing.

First and foremost, we must convince ourselves that laws are not properly real beings which can exist alongside of, between, or above

things. Rather, they can only exist in two forms. In the first place, namely, they can be the thoughts of a thinking subject, which brings to consciousness in them the rules which govern the inner operations of its thought, by following which it is able to start from a given point of reality or experience, and, subsequently, correctly reach and coincide with another point of reality at the further end of its train of thought. Such a rule as this may be merely a finger-post of the mind, a direction given to us to find the truth by such and such a by-path, which happens to suit our intelligence. If it is more than that —if it is a *law* binding *our intelligences* to travel along the same road in connecting conditions as *things* themselves take in their development— then we should see in these laws no more than the intrinsic nature of things, and it is a mere usage of speech to regard them as if they existed by themselves, and as if things submitted to them.

XVII.

Immanent Operation in Things an Ultimate Fact.

So long as we have only to do with an ideal content as in mathematics, it is readily conceivable that the

so-called laws are eternally valid as expressing a nature of the things which never changes. When we come to reality it is different. Here, too, laws are eternally valid as far as their content goes, and yet there is a contrast between cases in which they really apply and cases in which they do not. That which the law prescribes sometimes happens, and sometimes not, according as the conditions are or are not realised which were laid down in its antecedent and on which the result prescribed in the consequent depends.

So far now as such a law relates to a *single* being and simply enacts that upon one state p of that being another state q must follow, so far there is no difficulty. Immediately the state p is present in that being, there is realised the condition which distinguishes the case in which the law applies from cases in which it does not. Then in accordance with the law, in other words, agreeably to its own nature, the being in question causes the state q to follow on the state p. One might desire to know still further how it is that the being or its state p contrives to bring the state q to reality; but this can never be known; for any

answer one could give to the question must exhibit some process or other of mediation between p and q, and this would itself consist of a chain of states of which one is the effect of or produced by another. Such a process of production by a p of a q is exactly what we set out to explain. We must, therefore, be content to forego an explanation of this *immanent* operation by which one state of a being entails after itself another state of the same being. We must accept it simply as a given fact and as one which involves no inner contradiction.

XVIII.

Action of one Thing on Another Inexplicable as the Transition of a State or Mood from the One to the Other.

It is quite different with the cases in which one element a takes effect and acts upon another b. So long as we regard a and b as independent elements which have originally nothing to do with one another, no reason can be given why a state of the one should adjust itself to the state of the other; this is a transient effect which passes from one to the other and requires a process of mediation to carry it across. By way of arriving at this result we are ac-

customed to say that an influence or a state or a power or an effect passes over from *a* to *b*. The very variety of phrases thus employed is enough to show that we have not clearly thought out the subject to which this transition is ascribed. It is an old principle of metaphysics that a state cannot be separated from that of which it is a state. How then can a state be hovering even for one moment between *a* and *b*, being itself meanwhile a state of nothing, until it settles down as a state in *b*? Nor is it any clearer how, after the transition is completed, what was lately a state of nothing can become a state of *b*; although the common way of speaking assumes, without misgiving, that this part of the process needs no explanation at all. Can anything pass over from *a* to *b*, unless it exist by itself and be a real element, a thing or matter or force, supposing we regard this last as something which can exist by itself? In any examples, moreover, in which we can point to such a transition, the transition is not the true effect which we are anxious to grasp, but only leads up to it. When whatever is to pass across has passed, then there results in some manner—which it is futile to explain as

a fresh transition—that change in the properties of the second element which is the true effect. It seems, therefore, as if we could not explain the action of one element upon another by supposing that there is a transition of anything from one to the other.

XIX.

Nor can any Law as Such Compel One Element to Change Conditionally on Another Element Changing.

We might try to evade this useless process of mediation by supposing that the universal law has a direct control and asserts its power immediately without requiring any transitional terms. Thus, if once the law g be true, that, whenever in the element a the state α arises, the corresponding state β must arise in the element b, this result will always occur when the condition expressed in the antecedent is fulfilled; and there will, therefore, be no necessity for a to do something further in order that b should change itself agreeably to the law. But in this proposition it is overlooked that these very changes of things, of a into α and of b into β, sometimes occur and sometimes not. We who are observers of the whole course of the world and

think of ourselves as such, we, of course, know that in a particular second a finds itself in the state α, and that, therefore, we have before us a case in which that law applies according to which b should at once change itself into β. If, however, b is to adjust its behaviour to this fact, it must itself be informed of it. And the conclusion is that, whenever a law of Nature is to be applied, the different elements, which in accordance with it have mutually to adjust themselves, must be in a different condition, if a case of application of this law has arisen, to what they are in, when that case has not arisen. Such a warning of one element by another can only take place in the way of effects which they experience one from the other; for the universal law itself is no person which can stand outside and control things and challenge them to obey it. It follows then that we cannot in the least explain the action of things upon one another by supposing that a law merely governs them; on the contrary we must presuppose that things already act upon one another, before we can conceive that their ulterior behaviour should obey any such law.

XX.

We Must Retain the Idea of Effect, but Give Up the Pluralistic View.

We cannot then dispense with the idea of effect nor regard the question how an effect really takes place as satisfactorily answered. Yet although we give up the idea of describing the thing in positive terms, we must nevertheless clear the conception of it from any contradiction which would make its possibility altogether unthinkable. The pluralism of the view of the world taken by natural science involves such a contradiction, because it puts side by side two incompatible propositions: the one of which is that there is a multitude of equally original things which have nothing to do with one another, while the other is that these things have such a concern in one another that one of them adjusts itself to the rest. How can we justify this sympathy between things which, as we have shown, cannot be explained as a passage of anything between them nor yet by the supremacy of a law over them? We can only do so by giving up our preconceived idea that they are originally many and self-existent, and in the place thereof

adopting the view that there is a single truly existent being *m*; this *m* is the ground and basis of all the individual beings *a*, *b*, *c*, . . .; apart from *m* these individuals are not conditioned at all and have nothing upon which can rest either their qualitative nature, or, indeed, the laws according to which their states modify one another. If we adopt this view we may look at the whole problem as follows:

For Change either Within the Same Thing or of One Thing in Response to Another Presupposes a Self-maintaining Unity of all Things.

It is true that *m*, so far as its concrete nature goes, is entirely unknown; yet we think it may be taken for granted that we ought to attribute to it along with its unity a tendency to maintain itself, of such a kind that a change α cannot anywhere occur, for example in the individual being *a*, without occasioning the entire being *m* to produce a second compensating event which, taken together with α, constitutes the complete expression of the identical nature of *m*.

There is no reason why this compensating event should not arise in the being *a*; and if it does we have an instance of immanent working in which a state of a being produces a sequent state of the same being. But it may equally

well arise in another individual being b, and then there has taken place what we call a transient effect of one thing on another, but what is in reality only an immanent action of the one real being m within and on itself. For the state α, which we at first regarded merely as a state of a, is from the outset a state of m also and needs no mediation in order to become so; and this m, inasmuch as it is at the same time b, does not need to go out of itself in order to bring about the state β after b; on the contrary, this β, which arises out of the drift or import of m in its effort to maintain itself, is from the outset nothing else than a state of m the general import and drift of which entails it.

XXI.

We Cannot Know or Explain how this Absolute Unity is also Many.

There are many questions which may be asked about how we should conceive of this absolute existence which we symbolise as m. Some of them we can never hope to answer; others we must temporarily set aside. We must ever set aside any attempt to describe in positive terms, or to construct in thought, the process by

which this absolute being came to be not only one, and that unconditionally, but at the same time a many of things which condition one another reciprocally. No more can we hope to understand the process of modification, of self-division, of self-differentiation or emanation, by which figurative expressions we try to express in language the subordination of the individual to the absolute. It can never be possible, and it only leads to reasoning in a circle, if we try to picture the ultimate facts of reality—which our reason can only recognise as given—by the help of processes which are themselves later consequences of this first reality which we would explain. We must, therefore, regard this notion of the absolute as a limiting conception, which postulates an ultimate fact in order to understand the world, but which, we need not say, cannot possibly be deduced from or explained by its own consequences. And, therefore, these expressions which we used indicate no more than the eternal relation of dependence and subordination in which the individuals stand to the absolute; but they pronounce nothing as to the manner and the way in which they came into this relation.

Lastly, the other question: What is this absolute? cannot be answered for the present. The starting-point which we have chosen only allows us to infer that it is necessarily one, and affords a basis for our certitude that that rich and concrete principle which religion sets at the apex of reality must before all things satisfy this requirement of absolute unity.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE NATURE OF THE HIGHEST PRINCIPLE.

XXII.

Can this Absolute ONE be Identified with the God of Religion?

WE can only hope to answer the question just raised, as to what that is which is to take the place of a supreme principle, by considering that of which it is to be the principle; by a glance, that is, at the experience which we already have of the contents, the build and the plan of the real world. This would be too vast a task if we had to begin at the beginning; but in the religious and philosophical spheres of thought the human race has already in history gone through with it, and we can therefore content ourselves with testing the general points of view regarded as essential for the explanation of the course of the world; and so we can see whether the religious ideas, worked out long ago, of the nature of God, are compatible with what we find true in this con-

text, in such a way that we should identify just the conception of God which they involve with that which we have already discovered of a single principle of the world.

XXIII.

Let us then enumerate the several views which have been advanced in this connection. First we come upon the out-and-out materialism which allows matter and nothing else to be real, and would therefore concede to it alone the place of a highest principle.

Materialism Identifies It with Matter.

This view proximately rests on the ground that, when we talk of a super-sensuous reality, we only put together words which contradict one another, and that only the sensuous reality, which we can perceive, is real and actual. But for this very reason materialism contradicts itself. Matter is never in itself the object of a sensuous intuition; it is on the contrary conceived by our reason alone and added in thought, as a supplement, to the manifold variety of sensuous appearances, a supplement without which these appearances would not have the order and connection which

reason demands of them, if they are to be recognised as true reality, or as an appearance of the same. Materialism really admits this; for all the properties by which it characterises matter, for example the occupying of space, resistance, and all sorts of forces, indicate merely how the matter in question conducts itself in relation to something else which is like it, but they never indicate what it is in itself.

We can, therefore, simply say as follows: materialism, in so far as it puts forward matter as the principle of everything, goes beyond the limits of sense and affirms just that supersensuous nature of reality, which at the outset it would fain deny. And the true meaning of the view can only be this: that we must not assume a reality beyond sense without good reason; we must only assume it, if our sensuous experiences directly or indirectly compel us to assume it and at the same time define the nature of that which is to be assumed.

XXIV.

All this may be allowed, and yet it may be said that this idea of matter is the only plain possible and necessary supplement which our re-

flection can read into sensible experience in order to make it intelligible.

Yet Ascribes to Matter the Task of Remaining One and the Same Throughout Change and Difference.

We answer that so far as regards plainness or clearness we find on the contrary no idea so obscure as this of matter. We are accustomed to say of it that it occupies space, that it has form and movement, that, unconsciously, it exerts various forces, and yet all this at the bottom only tells us how this reality conducts itself, but not what it is. Because these modes of conduct on the part of matter are exhibited before our eyes in space, an extensive and accurate science of their forms and laws is possible. And this many-sided knowledge of what attaches to matter gives us a knowledge about the thing which we confuse with the knowledge of the thing. The latter we are utterly without; we cannot in the least say what a being truly is, or what it is like on the inside and within itself, when all we know of it is that it is wholly unchangeable and without any inner life, yet at the same time a point of departure for all kinds of effects.

Besides being obscure, such a conception of the real involves metaphysical difficulties. We

may point out, briefly to begin with, that a real element could not fulfil that function, which natural science requires it to, of being something in which effects centre, unless it can also suffer, that is to say, can also undergo a change of its inner states. For every change of these states is equivalent to a change of the being itself; and, consequently, any truly real element must fulfil the requirement of remaining itself at the same time that its states and conditions alter. Metaphysics teaches us that we cannot solve this problem by any artificial combination of ideas, rather we require an immediate experience to actually put before us an example of its solution and thereby convince us that it can be solved. Such an example is afforded us by spirit alone, for it alone is a unity, for this reason, that it feels and asserts itself to be such. It alone has changing states, which yet do not remove its identity, for the simple reason that, at the same time that it feels them, it only allows them to rank as states of itself and refers them to its identical core of being.

And this Task can only be Accomplished by a Conscious Spirit.

XXV.

Even if an Unconscious Being could be a Many-in-one, yet how could it Generate Consciousness?

This is but one example in which we have found those metaphysical demands answered, and we cannot, therefore, dismiss off-hand the objection that there may quite well be other examples which answer to them; in other words, that there may be a real being which has not the nature of spirit.

Still the task would await us of deriving from this being, if it is to be the principle of the world, the spiritual world also. Now, we must point out briefly that this can never be, so long as we invest that being with the mere properties by which we are accustomed to characterise matter. That is to say, it requires no experiments to convince us, but is evident from the first, that the moment can never arise when we can say: now it is clear of itself that the present movements and unconscious states of this blind reality can no longer remain what they are; henceforth they must evoke something unlike themselves, must transform themselves into feelings, ideas, and into consciousness generally.

We can therefore say that a materialism of this kind is really no more than a matter of words. The true meaning which underlies it is this: the matter which we only know under the aspect of a blind activity is something better than it seems, and it, or, in fact, all existence, unites in itself for ever two fundamental qualities, of which one under certain circumstances produces spiritual life, whilst the other produces the relation and conditions of materiality.

We answer that, as these two fundamental qualities are disparate and as little to be compared one with the other after their union as before it, therefore their union in the existent must be regarded only as a necessary assumption, not, however, as a fact which we can comprehend. And there still remain questions to be asked about this unity from which these two moments can follow and flow. The assumption of monistic systems, that spirit and matter have one root, which is neither one nor the other, but is ground and source of both, is thoroughly unsatisfactory. For it is quite impossible to have a real idea of, and to bring before the mind, a higher principle, which embraces both what is unconscious and conscious, but of which,

nevertheless, the content is to be subsumed neither under the conscious nor yet under the unconscious. This latter path we found led to nothing; let us now try the former.

XXVI.

Thus We are Driven Back on Idealism Which Takes up Matter into Mind.

The idealist philosophy is right in calling attention to the fact that our whole belief in the presence of an external world of matter reposes merely upon our feelings, intuitions, and ideas. It is right in holding that this outside material world is no more than a belief with which we try to supplement our experiences in order to understand their cohesion among themselves. It may be asked, therefore, whether in this inference, which we anyhow drew unconsciously, there is not something hasty, something which we must take back?

The Properties of Matter no Obstacle to this View.

Now we must allow off-hand that there is nothing in us which can cause our experiences to form a succession and to combine with one another as they do; all that takes place independently of ourselves. But for all that the ground and basis of the

succession and order of our experiences need not have the form which it seems to wear to us in our intuitions, or, which we give it in our thought, as a direct consequence of those intuitions. The essential properties by which this real outer world—which is apparently quite alien to the spirit—distinguishes itself, are chiefly spacial extension and form, and also the forces with which things assert or change their positions and forms. Now, there is nothing in any of these properties to compel us to assume, as the subject of which they are predicated, a something which stands originally in opposition to what is real as spirit.

XXVII.

1. Space a Purely Mental Appearance Engendered in us by Agencies which are not Spacial.

And firstly as regards space. Our intuition presents this—and we find it hard not to believe that it is so—as something outside ourselves, while we are to be found in it. But this intuition cannot prove that space extends itself just the same, if we think away this intuition, for which and before which it extends itself. In order to judge whether that which appears to us

would in our absence be just the same as it appears, we must carefully examine and see if that which we say about the object, so far as it appears to us, will have any sense left at all, supposing we make abstraction of this relation to ourselves; and we must consider whether it will then agree with our idea of an independent existence.

Metaphysic has reasons which we cannot here analyse for denying to space any such objective reality. Its pronouncement—which we must at present be content to regard as mere hypothesis—is to the following effect: outside ourselves there exist an indefinite number of real beings capable of acting, and of being acted upon, and differing from one another in many ways in their qualitative natures. These beings, however, are not spacially beside one another, but they are separated from one another merely by the differences of their natures, just as they are only related to one another so far as their natures are akin; they are more or less to be compared to the notes of a harmony which, like them, are together, yet not together in space, which like them differ from one another, and yet are not

separated by distance in space, and which, lastly, stand to one another in all kinds of harmonic relationships in accordance with which they act upon one another, or, at least, in our mind seem to do so. Now, if different real beings thus act upon our soul, and, as we might expect, exert various influences thereon corresponding to the various intelligible relations between them, it is only the peculiar way in which the soul itself acts which translates these impressions, that have come piecemeal to it, into the language of spacial intuition, so producing for itself the picture of an extended outside world, in which the images of particular things take up over against one another such positions as express in a symbolic way the greater or lesser closeness from moment to moment of their intelligible relations. We then ascribe to ourselves, or rather to our bodies, a definite place in the space thus intuited; but as a matter of fact it is not we who are in space, but it is space which is in us.

Space Really in Us, not We in Space.

XXVIII.

2. Material Forces Express an Inner Nature of Things, which may well be Spiritual.

Let us next consider the various modes in which the material reality conducts itself; for example, the resistance which it exerts against forces which would penetrate it, as well as the other forces of attraction or repulsion which it exerts in regard to what is like itself. Now there is nothing in these forces and in this resistance which should make us suppose that the subject to which they are attributed is something entirely *sui generis* and not to be compared at all with spiritual nature. On the contrary they express nothing else than affinities and antitheses, mutual exclusions and implications, which can just as well exist between elements ultimately spiritual in their nature, but within this general character differing from one another, as they can exist between elements of any other kind, which differ from one another within the limits of their general character. And it is only for that spirit which looks at these processes of other spiritual elements from outside, and interprets them symbolically in the language

of its own spacial intuition,—it is only for such a spirit that these physical activities appear to be something apart from, and strange to, the spiritual life, something which is bound up with a blind substrate of its own; they are really only consequences of inner states of things which may be fully akin to our own spiritual states.

XXIX.

Some would admit that in view of these considerations it is possible to suppose that everything which really exists, and therefore before all else the infinite reality which embraces all things, may be of a spiritual nature. But they are generally inclined to interpret this somewhat vague way of speaking in the sense that it is only an unconscious spirit which can constitute this highest being. We cannot, however, for a moment admit that this conception of an unconscious spirit has in this sense any real meaning whatever. We cannot, indeed, deny that there are within our spiritual life unconscious states and processes; but it does not follow that these, as unconscious, and as at

Is the Ultimate Real an Unconscious Spirit?

This View is a Wrong Inference from Unconscious States within Human Mind.

the same time states of a spirit, even occur except in those beings which are by nature conscious spirits. We must only look upon them as cases in which a conscious, spiritual life is arrested or limited; we must not suppose that apart from the presupposition of a conscious, spiritual life, they may form a peculiar class of existenee, which is unconscious, yet not thoroughly identical with an unspiritual and blind activity. For as a matter of fact we cannot say how the spirituality of a life which was spiritual, and yet by nature unconscious, could ever reveal itself. On the other hand, we can form some idea of the source whence these unconscious states of conscious spiritual life arise. For every finite spirit, and with such alone our observations have to do, the infinite reality, which works in it and determines both its nature and the laws of its faculties, is something foreign, in so far as it is far greater than and transcends the individual creature which has a nature defined by differences which sever it from others like it. We can easily suppose, therefore, that to the consciousness of this finite spirit that and that alone is accessible which consists of remote consequences of this its nature, whereas that is

entirely hid from it which forms the conditioning ground of its existence, and secures to its faculties the possibility of exercise. And thus may it appear as if the finite spirit to its entire spiritual existence were itself in turn attached to and bound up with a hidden core not spiritual in its nature, but just an unintelligible substance.

XXX.

Is the Absolute Personal as well as Spiritual?

There is a further question whether we ought to attach to the spiritual nature of the highest being the further predicate of personality; and this question is generally answered in the negative, because it is supposed that personality involves an opposition between the personal being and other beings equally real with itself; and, therefore, to ascribe personality to the highest being would be in effect to set limits to it, whereas it must ever remain unlimited.

Contrast of Ego to Non-Ego.

In the first place we must point out that the position that *I* can only be real in opposition to a *not-I* is altogether vague and unsound. It is a common error to

suppose that two things, because their conceptions are correlative, and form the terms of an opposition or of a relation, have therefore arisen in and through this relation itself. Let us take the case of two lines going different ways, right and left; these lines have nevertheless considered in themselves some direction or other; and it is true to say that each one of them remains what it is, no matter whether or not we compare the other with it; and what is more, it it is just this which it is, this nature of its own, which constitutes the ground on account of which, if the comparison be instituted, it can only be interpreted as going to the right instead of to the left. It is just the same with the distinction between *I* and *not-I*. These terms do not arise merely in and through their contrast; but each of them was, whatever it is, before ever that contrast was made, and was so, in spite of the circumstance, that in this case the one of these conceptions is only indicated by the verbal negation of the other. Indeed, that which constitutes the essence of the *I*, previous to the contrast, is itself the ground on account of which in the contrast it presents itself only as the *I*, and not as the *not-I*.

And yet this general, logical consideration does not settle the problem which presented itself. For, granted that a spirit has a being of its own quite apart from its opposition to and contrast with another, yet one cannot but insist on the fact that it only becomes a personal spirit by entering into this opposition and contrast; and this not in the sense that we distinguish it from the other term of the opposition, but in the sense that it of itself makes this distinction, and distinguishes itself as *I* from its *not-I*. And thus it would appear that after all the true recognition of oneself as an *I*—and it is just in this that personality consists—depends on the presence of a second point of reference to which the *I* can oppose itself.

Is Essential to Personality.

XXXI.

The objection might be raised that personality is not the same thing with the real putting forth and assertion of this contrast of the *I* with the *not-I*, but is already given through the nature of that being which can create this contrast. We have never any doubt of our own identical personality, although we are conscious of not al-

ways fulfilling this rôle of contrast with and opposition to a *not-I* or external world.

But we should be inclined to say that this occasional renunciation belongs rather to the imperfections owing to which our human personality falls short of its true idea. Of the highest being we shall be inclined to assume that its personality only attaches to it, if it unceasingly fulfils that condition which we regard as the ground and basis of personality.

On the other hand we are perhaps somewhat confused about the content and meaning of this condition. We speak of the *I* and of the *not-I* being opposed to one another, and this usage of speech may easily lead us to regard the *not-I* as something no less evidently real and self-subsistent than the *I*. And we are the more easily led astray, because we do, as a matter-of-fact, find before us other spirits and things by which we are limited and which we not unnaturally oppose to ourselves, and find ourselves able to grasp under the conception of the *not-I*. But it was not such contents as these which we necessarily intended to ascribe to the *not-I*, when we discovered in the *not-I* and in our contrast therewith the condition of our personality. It

was quite enough then, and for that purpose, if the *not-I* just indicated all that is *not-I*. But under this head would come the inner states of the *I* quite as much as all the things assumed to be external. And therefore a spirit has personality, or rather is a person, so soon as ever it knows itself as unitary subject in opposition to its own states and to its own ideas; these states and ideas it recognises itself as uniting in itself, as the subject of them, while they are only dependent states in it.

But the Non-Ego Here Consists of the Spirit's Own Inner States and Idea, not of an Outside Reality.

And it may incidentally be remarked that the human consciousness anyhow has nothing else immediately given to it than this inner world of its ideas and presentations; and that the thought of an outside world, which contains in itself the basis of the contents and order of this inner world, is itself no more than a product of our reason, which thereby tries to make that order intelligible to itself. And we can therefore truly say of man also, that if it is a contrast with a *not-I* that makes him a person, yet this contrast is not between him and a reality outside him, but is only a contrast between him and his own ideas and presentations, and in particular

between himself and his idea of such an independent reality as he has made for himself by dint of his reason and to satisfy its claims.

Now, if we would apply these considerations to God, we must affirm this as preliminary, that the thought of His personality does not require us to assume a reality outside Him and limiting Him, but only the production in Him of a world of ideas to which He finds Himself in contrast as to His own states.

Therefore God may be Personal, yet not Finite.

XXXII.

But even if it is admitted that in the case of the infinite spirit its own inner world of ideas can serve as the other term, in opposition to which it conceives of itself as *I*, there still remains the question: What was the origin of this world of ideas?

Using the analogy of the human spirit we might say, that it is only by opposition to and interaction with the real outside world that we can gain the rudiments of that whole of ideal contents, which later on and up to a certain

In us the Stimulus of a Reality not in us leads to our Recognition of our Personality.

degree serves to develope in us by way of antithesis a feeling of our own personality.

But, apart from religious considerations telling against it, we cannot apply this analogy to the spirit which we would regard as the ground of everything. Throughout the system of the world, manifold and variously articulated as it is, every individual being is what it is not owing to itself, but by commission from that highest principle. The import or drift of the whole, however, gives to the finite spirit a right to exist only in a particular part and point of this system; or, to use the ordinary view and expression, in a particular time and at a particular place. Nor is this finite spirit what the rest of the world is; so that it is only by means of a continuous interaction with an outside world, which is alien to it, and not in the way of immediate knowledge, that it can attain ideas of this world, and of its own changing relation thereto. The infinite spirit, on the other hand, is not limited to a particular position in the order which it has itself grounded, nor yet to a particular moment of time, and it will, therefore, possess from the very beginning this immediate knowledge of the whole world,

An Infinite Spirit Needs no Such Stimulus.

and will not need to have a history in the course of which its ideal world may, for a first time, arise for it out of, and in the way of, interaction with something else.

God is an Eternally Active Thought.

Now, we shall see later on that it is not enough to suppose that the contents of this ideal world are perfectly unchanging, that they form a self-articulating and eternal idea. Rather we deem it essential to the notion of personality that there should go on in the person a flow or movement of thought and ideas in which something is experienced. This being so, we must regard this movement as an eternal fact which had no beginning, and instead of defining the highest principle by ascribing to it a group of stationary properties, we can only define it as a constant activity. This view, no doubt, puts a strain upon our imagination. Nevertheless, it is idle to try to trace the commencement of this inner movement in God to any impact from without. There could not be such an impact nor such a beginning; for it would mean that the relation between God and that outside reality was quite different at the moment of impact to what it was previously, before He had allowed this

impact to be made on Himself; and, therefore, even if God had been at rest, we should still have to assume a movement in this outer world which led up to this change; and this movement we should have to follow up in eternal regression, because movement could never be derived from a state of equilibrium and repose, that from the beginning of the world had everywhere prevailed.

XXXIII.

Meaning of *I*.

Till now, we have gone too far in following the traditional custom of identifying what we mean by personality with the special notion of self-consciousness. We have merely tried, however, to remove the difficulties with which the opposition, supposed to be necessary, between the *I* and the *not-I* perplexed our conception of a divine personality. But now that we have, as we believe, removed these difficulties, there arises afresh the question which before we merely hinted at: for what does the *I* really take itself, when it has succeeded in forming a notion of itself by means of this opposition? We pointed out at an earlier stage of the argument that the *I* must already have some

contents of its own, or else, when the opposition is established, it could not be sure of a fixed and unexchangeable place therein. In what, then, consists that which the spirit affirms of itself, when it regards itself as an *I?*

"*I* am Subject and Object of my Thinking."

The answer generally made, is that the *I* is the identity of the thinking subject with the thought object. But this definition really fixes no more than the general conception of *I-hood.* It only determines the form of existence in which not only *I*, but also *thou* and *he* have their places assigned to them. Personality on this view would simply consist in the *I* being distinguished from the *thou* and *he.* What then am *I?* Suppose one answered thus: *I* am subject and object of my thoughts, this would, at least, require that we should understand what is meant by the possessive pronoun, *mine.* For only then can we point to the subject of my thoughts as the *I?*

What Then is Mine?

It is, however, clear that put together ideas as we will, we cannot define the meaning of this word *mine.* We cannot say: it is that which belongs to the *I*, for if we do, the old difficulty at once recoils upon us, and we are explaining the meaning of the *I*

by the reference to the *mine*. There is, therefore, nothing left for it, but to have given us an immediate experience through which, and not before which, the distinction between what we call mine and what is not mine, and with it the distinction between *I* and *thou* is felt and revealed. It may be observed that it is only in spoken language that the personal pronouns *I* and *thou* appear to be the first conceptions to have a fixity of their own, and the possessive pronouns mine and thine, to win their meaning after them as if they were secondary conceptions. It is not so in our immediate and inward experience out of which both contrasts spring; in that experience we do not find this subordination; on the contrary the notion of mine and thine is in it first and not second.

The Idea of Mine Given Through Pleasure or Pain.

This experience we get in the form of a feeling of interest, of pleasure, and the reverse. That which pleases or hurts myself is utterly distinct from everything which I regard and imagine either as indifferent or even as painful or pleasurable in the abstract, that is to say, apart from my feeling of it. The former belongs to me and is my state; the latter does not belong to me as a state, but

belongs to another subject. And, again, we would observe that, in saying this, we would not imply that we have already a notion of the *I* and of its contrasts *thou*, *he*, etc., nor that we use these feelings or the want of them merely as badges or labels to mark off one set of states as belonging to the *I* and another set of states as belonging to the *thou* and *he*. What we do mean is this, that in this inward experience there is revealed to us, for the first time, the absolute distinction which there is between what awakes this feeling and what does not awake it; and through this feeling, and through it alone, is revealed to us the equally wide contrast of the subjects *I*, *thou*, and *he*, to which we in reflective thought refer the states we have experienced.

XXXIV.

Pleasure and Pain in Us is first Excited by *stimuli ab extra*.

Against this view a similar objection may be raised to that which was raised against self-consciousness. If the spirit cannot be personal in the full sense, without having the faculty of feeling pleasure and pain, and of contrasting itself with what it is not by means of that interest in itself which is

pleasure or pain, it looks as if the old difficulty had arisen, and as if the spirit found itself once more in actual opposition to a real outside world. For it is indisputable that, according to the analogy of our human states, pleasure and pain can only be derived from the impressions which enter our soul from without, and correspond or conflict with the conditions of our welfare.

In this way, therefore, it would seem as if the divine spirit must have something outside itself which can either favour or prejudice it; the particular way, however, in which our feelings arise cannot be decisive here. The question was merely whether we can think of them at all as pertaining to an infinite spirit. For it may be only for us finite spirits that they must arise, if at all, through external impressions to which our spirit, not being creative, owes the earliest stimulus of its inner movement. When they have once arisen in us, it may quite well be the case that they remain for us, and persist without any opposition whatever to an outside reality; and this is particularly the case with all our æsthetic and moral feelings: these are hardly so much expressions of what conduces to our

subjective or individual good or harm, as recognitions of the inner worth or worthlessness attaching to a content or an action brought before the mind. For the infinite spirit all these contents, which in our own case, though primarily due to stimuli coming from without, yet come to be matter of æsthetic and moral judgments, would probably be inner productions of his own creative fantasy, and his personality would consist in being the subject which feels in the presence of this worth or worthlessness of what is so produced. His personality would lie in the judgments made in the way of pleasure or pain, satisfaction or dissatisfaction, approval or disapproval.

For an Infinite Spirit these Stimuli would be Creations of His Own Mind.

XXXV.

These considerations must not be taken to mean that we are in possession of general principles according to which we can determine whether we should or should not award personality to a God who is to be in the future. There can naturally not be a circle of laws thus antecedent to God and regulative of the form of His

existence. All we can aspire to do is to analyse and justify our own notion of God, and, in particular, to show that the singleness, infinity, and freedom from limitation by others, which are essential features in our notion, are not logically incompatible with the ascription of personality to Him. Were they so, our whole notion of Him would become an idle cobweb of the mind.

But, furthermore, we may say that this very notion of a perfected personality, far from being destroyed by those predicates, is only for the first time realised in them. The finite spirit, which has a world outside itself and can only become acquainted with it gradually through a series of interactions with it, requires a psychical mechanism to this end, namely, the flow and course of its ideas. And this mechanism renders it inevitable that only a portion, and never more, of its entire knowledge, feeling, and effort, should be operative in it at one time. This mechanism, moreover, makes it inevitable that, as its development goes forward, its entire spiritual conditions should alter by the accretion of what is new and forgetting of what is old; so that the whole is not ever truly together in any

one moment. And lastly, this mechanism entails this: that the forces and laws which govern our inward life must always seem something alien to ourselves—some nature lent to us—a hidden core of our true being. And, therefore, complete personality can only be in God, while to man can belong but a weak and faint copy thereof.

XXXVI.

The divine attributes are best to be recognised by a consideration of the relations in which God stands to the world; those considerations naturally fall under another chapter and may be classed under the threefold title of creation, maintenance, and governance of the world.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE NOTION OF CREATION.

XXXVII.

WHEN we speak of creation, this question at once presents itself. To say that the world is a creation by God implies that He has some continuing authority over it: what is this constant and eternal authority thus implied?

God did not Create the World and Then Leave It Alone.

If the creation were an act once for all performed, and of which the significance did not survive itself, we should not have any religious interest in a history which was thus past and done with. We might have a scientific curiosity in discovering how its particular phases succeeded one another, but we could not even then gain any fresh experience of it. For a history of the exact manner in which the creation or any part of it came about would be self-contradictory, because it would presuppose an earlier world, whose forces, means, and laws were employed

by God in order to make real the world now before us; and this world would in such a case not be the whole reality, but would fall within a larger reality, as a later addition thereto newly constituted by its forces.

XXXVIII.

Nor did He Create It Out of Something.

The first clear thought involved in the notion of creation is this: that it did not consist in a mere transformation of an already existing reality. This is what we would express in the time-honoured phrase that the world was created out of nothing. We should rather say that God did not create the world out of something; the old form of expression implies that *nothing* was a kind of substrate used up in the world as building material. This first thought, then, involves the other: that the fact of the creation, as well as the contents of the world created, has its foundations in God Himself alone.

Creation in What Sense a Development of the Divine Nature?

This thought might lead us to suppose that the creation was in a way a development of the nature of God. And it is easy to see what people wish to avoid or exclude when they resort to

this idea of development; they wish to avoid the idea that there is no better reason why the creation should really have happened than why it should not have, and that there is no better reason to be given for the world being as it is than for its being any other, which it might have been, though it is not. We would avoid supposing that the existence and inner structure of the world are alike entirely baseless and groundless realities. In pressing for this we may preliminarily give our assent to the view that the creation was a development of the Divine nature; but this view does not satisfy the claims of religion. For development implies that outside the being which develops there is a universal order or circle of supreme laws, which determine in a general way the secondary state of this being, which is to arise and issue out of a first and earlier state. Apart from the jurisdiction of such universal laws, we cannot give any reason why out of a particular state *a* another particular state *b* should issue, rather than any other state you like, which we may call *x*. It is only in reference to such supreme laws that we can regard the sequence *a* . . *b* as a development of the being,

Certainly not as Implying a Law Above God According to Which He Develops.

whereas the sequence $a \ldots x$ would be an irregular change. Now, if we apply these considerations to God, it would appear that there is some fate governing Him which His nature must obey, and which on the one hand compels Him in the first instance to give reality to a world, and on the other hand to create just this world and no other.

XXXIX.

For an Activity Founds the Law, not the Law the Activity.

To such objections we may reply that we must give up the customary view, according to which the laws of reality are regarded as a self-subsistent power controlling the real and actual. They are nothing more than general forms of thought in which a spirit, contemplating the course of the world and comparing its different moments, might sum up the whole system of it in one brief expression. What is thus briefly expressed is the thing realised, realised by and through the own nature of things themselves, which are what they are and act as they act of themselves, so making it possible for us to comprehend their behaviour as a case of this or that law. Now, for finite things there is a sense in

which they are under these laws; they are so, because each of them is accompanied by others which exhibit a like behaviour and so render the law a universal one. On this account the law or the order of the world seems by reference to each individual being to be an embracing and uniting power, because it never is really operative except in the form of a concurrent action of many beings. When, however, we speak of the highest principle, we cannot suppose that there is over or beyond him such an order as he could in common with others obey. Rather it is the case that everything which we regard as a law or ordering of the world is just the world's own nature, and it is only our incorrect, though hardly avoidable, way of looking at things which represents it as a rule separable therefrom and having already an authority from some other source to which this nature must submit.

But there is no Activity Behind and Above God.

XL.

This thought can be made clearer by the old positions of religious philosophy in which it is laid down that God is one and single, all separate properties being denied to Him. We

Nor is God the Exemplification of a Pre-existing Conception.

ascribe mere unity to everything which we call a being at all. Such unity is evidently true of God. We would also require Him to be numerically one; but just in this idea there may lurk an error; for according to it God is only the unique exemplification as a matter of fact of a general conception of the Deity; and this conception, before ever God and the whole world were, had its fixed place in a realm of ideas, which existed like an eternal fate or destiny. This conception, moreover, had, on this view, a meaning of its own to which the nature of any real Deity must correspond. As against such a view, it is right to insist, that only after God and after the world are in existence and we ourselves in it, in fine, only after our own spiritual nature is as it is in the system of this world, only then are we able and obliged to frame our universal conceptions of the world and to subsume the real under them. But this way of thinking cannot be applied in the one case of a supreme being, without its formal application conflicting with the actual content of the thought. God is not single, as the one actual example, in opposition to the many merely thinkable examples, of a general

notion of God; but He is single, because there is absolutely no general notion at all under which His nature can be subsumed.

XLI.

The second of the views adduced is wrong, if it implies that the being of God is empty and without contents. But it rightly abstains from attributing to God predicates in the same sense in which we ascribe them to finite things. For whenever we say that a thing is green or sweet or salt, we at once range this thing under a conception of quality which has validity beyond the limits of this thing, which is met with in other things, and which, even if it did not occur in any real at all, would yet always have a definite significance and be distinct from other conceptions which along with it form the all-embracing notion and the system of all that is thinkable, which we mean by the kingdom of ideas. We cannot so speak of God. There cannot before Him or above Him be a store of predicates, possible or significant in themselves, among which He has to choose those which serve to constitute

Yet God is no Empty Abstraction.

His own being. Rather this whole realm of ideas and the possibility of individual things deriving their predicates therefrom is itself the consequence or the creation or the own true nature of the Divine being. We are therefore quite right in not attributing to God any single property in the sense that He participates in it as in something more universal than Himself; on the contrary His very being consists in this, that He is the ground of the whole system of qualities and properties which may belong to things in the world. Nevertheless there is no harm in following the usual way of speaking and in calling God unchangeable, eternal, and just; only we must take care not to mean by these expressions that God falls under a universal conception, which would retain its significance and continue to be, even if God were not.

But the All-in-All of Qualities and Attributes.

XLII.

The same thoughts are suggested by the question which may be raised as to the omnipotence of God, the question, namely, whether God can only do what is

Can God do what is Impossible or only what is Possible?

possible, or whether He can also do what is impossible.

Of course we at once answer the first question in the affirmative; and yet we feel at once that the answer is a crooked one; for it clearly presupposes something of this kind: that before there was any idea of God's being and acting, there was some mechanism or other, before the world and above conditions, which determined in any case and in any world which might eventually come to be, whether created by God or the devil, what should be possible and what impossible. To the fiat of this destiny the omnipotence of God is subject, if we regard Him as only being able to do what is possible; that is to say, He becomes the greatest of all the forces of nature, but clearly does not answer to what we mean by omnipotent. But the other position that God can do what is impossible may be dismissed at once because it has no meaning. For how could we tell in what way the impossible differs from the possible, if there were any power, even a Divine power, which could bring about and realise the impossible? We may therefore settle this question also by saying that there exists not for God a contrast

between what can and what cannot be, a contrast which would be earlier than Himself and valid apart from what He does.

XLIII.

Relation of Eternal Truths to God.

The same doubt besets one with special reference to the origin of the eternal truths, and is brought to a point in the question, whether God created the eternal truths as well as everything else, or whether they are for Him also self-evident and merely recognised by Him as true and valid.

If these questions are to have any sense at all, we must define the subject which is indicated here under the ordinary title of God. If we assume that there is not yet a realm of self-evident truth, surely the God who first creates this realm of truth must be, until He does so, a thoroughly empty power, characterised neither by theoretical nor by moral content. For any such content can itself only be, if we presuppose the truths according to which He is like Himself and different from others. We can have no religious interest in affirming that truth was created by such a being as this, who has as yet

nothing in common with our idea of God. On the other hand, to say that there was such a creation of truths, is to say nothing new. For since this principle, from which they are to go forth, is itself, until they do so, entirely without content, the assertion that it created the truths means no more than that they received an unconditional affirmation. And that means no more than this, that the eternal validity which we ascribe to these truths was founded somehow, though we cannot name the founder thereof, nor distinguish him from what he founded. And this is just what we would express, when we say that the truths are eternal.

XLIV.

They are not so Much Recognised by Him as Part of Him from the First.

The other assumption, that God only recognised the eternal truths as true, leads to the same conclusion. We can only recognise a proposition as being true, as a mere matter of fact is true, when it is forced upon us by an alien power; as really true we only recognise that which is identical with the nature and fundamental procedure and mode of our thought. Now a finite being

is under the necessity of having its consciousness of its own nature borne in upon it from without. And on that account the recognition and attainment of the consciousness of necessary truth is for us a piecemeal process of which we can give a history. But in the case of God such a historical process is inconceivable, and His recognition of eternal truth would only be a cognition of His own nature, which is eternal and without a beginning. If this, His nature is not identical with the content of this truth, we can find no sense in saying that it is recognised by him; it would only be another way of saying that the truth in question is valid absolutely and unconditionally.

XLV.

One sense remains in which we can speak of truth being derived or deduced. We can do so, if to suit our human comprehension we analyse the being of God into a severalty of properties, but, instead of leaving these without any connection one with the other, find ourselves obliged to regard them as a system ordered and arranged by a single principle.

Theoretical Truths Cannot be Connected with Moral Truths, Even in God.

Now, religious thought has before all things an interest in ascribing to God the ethical qualities of goodness and holiness. But it is impossible to derive the notion of these properties, or, indeed, of anything else which has any worth at all from these eternal, logical, and mathematical truths, which are morally indifferent. On the contrary, these ethical notions involve the idea of and pre-suppose certain forms of relation between manifold related terms, and these forms we must assume and cannot dispense with, because without them what is good or holy could never be realised at all.

One might, therefore, conceive that these eternal theoretical truths also are merely formal expressions of that moral content and nature of God, in spite of their appearing, as they do to us, to be self-evident first principles dependent for their validity upon nothing. Upon this view, to express it clearly, these theoretical truths, which we regard as the most primitive, would have no reason for being true in a world which was not destined to realise the idea of good, and would have no necessity or intellectual cogency for those beings who found themselves in such a

world. But we do not think we need follow out this thought any more, because it only leads to playing with language.

XLVI.

This would settle the point that the eternal truths are neither creations of a God who was already God before they were valid, nor alien powers only recognised by God to be valid. Rather, their content constitutes for us part of our definition of God, and the idea of an omnipotence which could change these truths is not only an idea of no religious service, but is the mere abstraction of a power which has neither characteristic content nor aim, and to which, therefore, we can as little attribute a reality as we can to a movement which has neither velocity nor direction.

Why has just *This* and no Other World Come to be Real?

But the world does not consist of these eternal truths, but of the changeable things and events which obey them, and occur according to them. Two questions, therefore, arise: firstly, why is the real world just this one and not another of all those which were also possible on the basis of these same

truths? And secondly, why has *this* world come to be real?

It is only the latter of these two questions which now concerns us. The usual opinion is thus expressed: the divine intelligence pointed out to God the general modes of procedure which are God's own nature, and must, therefore, be followed in any world which issues from God. In His Divine fantasy, He beheld, and beholding, created the countless particular constructions which were possible on the basis of those general modes, but of these many worlds which thus existed in the thought of God, only one is present in reality. How came it to be so? Is this transition to reality an emanation by natural necessity from God's being? or is it the act of a will which gave reality to that which understanding and imagination could only represent as possible—a reality which of itself this could not take on?

Is the World a Necessary Emanation from God or an Act of His Will?

XLVII.

There is one point in particular which these opposed theories have in common, but which

they leave obscure. According to both theories, it is clear that this emanation or creation brings something to pass, which, without it, was not. What is it, then, which the world, which is maintained in God or thought by Him, gains by emanating or issuing from Him, or by being projected out of His mere thought into reality?

The Theory of Emanation Implies a Distinction of Reality as Inside from Reality as Outside the Mind.

The world could not emanate from God if it were not in Him beforehand. Now in what consists, so to speak, the practical advantage or disadvantage which the world reaps thereby; what is the new position towards God which it obtains by performing the act which we call emanation? For this expression cannot be taken in its literal sense. When we speak of this process, we would really imply some change in the metaphysical relation between God and the world, and this change we subsequently, after we have defined this meaning, sum up in a figurative way as a process in space. This definition people generally slur over, and content themselves with the mere words: immanence, transcendence, and emanation, words which only make clear one thing, namely, that we are under the necessity of attributing to the world a cer-

tain relative independence of its own, but do not know exactly how to define this.

The other view represents the world as already existing in God as thought, before ever it is real, and as being subsequently realised. But it does not tell us what of good or of bad, or of novelty at all, the world would gain by making this transition into reality. In other words, we do not learn from this view in what the reality really consists which is given to the world by God. For us, who are finite beings, what we merely think is easily distinguished from what is real. For we are already environed by a world different from ourselves; and that is real which within this outer world asserts itself as a condition of any result whatever, whereas what we merely think has only such a conditioning force upon our own world of thought, and is far from causing any direct change in the context of the outer world. Consequently for us men the question, how reality is distinct from unreality, is very easily answered. But let us once transport ourselves in the course of our religious reflections into the inner nature of God, and we find that we can no more avail

A Distinction Applicable to Us, but not to God.

ourselves of this distinction. For in regard to God there is not this already existing outer world, in which He can arrange His thoughts and so give to some of them a reality which He withholds from others. Each of His thoughts, so far as He thinks it and it is thought by Him, is equally real with every other. And, therefore, the question once more recoils upon us: wherein consists that which is added to one of His thoughts, if it is to be exclusively real and so contrast with others?

XLVIII.

What Then Does a World Gain by Being Created?

The number of expressions of which we avail ourselves to answer this question is inexhaustible. Some would say that reality is just that which God gives to the world, which He thinks, by realising it. But that does not tell us what are properly the marks and nature of this reality.

Even if we remain contented with the idea of a blind and unintelligent material world, we yet find in this only such effects as flow in each moment and according to universal laws from existing circumstances and conditions; conse-

quently there happens in this world nothing new, and its whole course of events might be fully determined beforehand; and in so far as God has thought this world, it would have just the same inner order and coherency in His thought, as it manifests in its realisation of itself to us. Nor can the novelty of being made real simply consist in this, that the world-plan, which already existed as a system of simultaneous thoughts in God, now unfolds itself in time. For, on the one hand, we cannot conceive an empty time already existing outside God, into which He projects His thoughts; and, on the other hand, once the world is conceived of as in time and as filling time, God and His thoughts cannot be excluded from this time, but must be equally present with the world in every one of its moments; in fine, the complete thought of this world must already have had in God this temporal order and arrangement which realisation is alone supposed to give to it.

There is only one way out of these perplexities. We must, in fact, regard the reality as we did above, when we said that that is real which is given to a finite spirit as a perception independent on

Creation is of Spirits and of Spirits Alone.

itself. If therefore the divine thought of the world is to have a realisation other than that which it already has in the divine mind, this can only be by God's creating individual finite spirits, and by His causing to arise in them the cosmic thoughts in question as external perceptions, or, as we may now put it, as *His* thoughts. And at this rate creation may be defined as follows: God permitted the thought which at first was only His own to become the thought of other spirits; or He caused this world of spirits to arise in which His continual influence and operation causes His own cosmic thoughts to arise and figure as the appearance of an outer world surrounding them and capable of being perceived by them.

XLIX.

For Nothing can Exist for Itself and Otherwise than as the Thought of Another Spirit, Except a Spirit Itself.

We may add here that the words immanence and transcendence denote no more than a thoroughly fruitless play of thought. We are apt to speak as if these two expressions denoted processes which need no explanation, processes by which, when they occur, things are either given or deprived of

independent existence. As a matter of fact these words are only symbolic expressions borrowed from space, and have no intelligible meaning in themselves. We cannot logically distinguish from God the humblest thing, for independent upon God there is nothing. A thing has a real, albeit relative, independence, only when and in so far as it asserts the same. Only a spirit can so assert its independence. It alone feels and represents itself as the common centre of its own states, and so brings itself into that opposition to God, who created it, which can only be conceived of as existing between creator and created. On the other hand, a thing which was not conscious of itself, and which did not feel, or in some fashion or other enjoy what we may call being-for-itself, would never be anything more than a selfless state of the creator, and there would be nothing by which its assumed transcendent reality could be distinguished from the reality which it already has as a thought of God.

Spirits Alone can be Called Substances.

It deserves to be remarked that it is a mistake to understand these propositions in the sense that God has given independent reality as substances only to spirits and not to things; and that in consequence spirits

are able to assert their relative independence as against the Divine being. By substantiality is not meant a transparently plain manner of existence involving such independence; it is only a title which belongs to anything, which owing to its nature asserts such independence; and as such is true of what we mean by spirituality. Or to put it shortly, spirits are substances; and, unlike all else, are substances because, by their very nature, they possess this faculty of being-for-themselves, because they think themselves, and are not merely thoughts in the mind of another. But things cannot be substances, because they have not got this faculty of being-for-themselves which alone gives you the right to be called a substance.

Things are Mere Appearances in the Minds of Spirits, and not Real or Created in Themselves.

Thus the view which the philosophy of religion must take of creation coincides with the idealistic view of speculation, which adjudges real being in the true sense to spirits alone, but does not allow that the things which exist between the spirits are equally real; declaring them rather to be mere appearances brought up before our minds by the constant influence and operation of God, and appearances, moreover, which properly arise

in ourselves alone. The idea of creation itself has a meaning only in relation to this world of spirits; because it is for spirits alone that the will of God produces a reality distinct from the mere being thought by Him, a reality which through the operation of God constitutes them not merely thoughts in His mind, but true and independent subjects of thought on their own account.

L.

Now, if we regard a world of things as only a system of appearances which God reveals to a kingdom of spirits by way of stimulating them to act, and as objects of their perception, if we take this view, then the idea that the world which can be observed by us is the whole creation of God loses much of the cogency which it had so long as we regarded that world as truly existing. We are able now to suppose rather that God causes a plurality of ordered worlds to appear before many spirit-worlds, and of these many worlds one need not be discoverable by observation within the limits of another.

This World of Things need not be the Only World.

Religious faith sets such a higher world-order

over against this earthly world which we perceive under the name of the kingdom of heaven. The facile prejudice that just this creation which we perceive, and no more, forms the whole runs counter to this faith. If we regard this world as a whole, we cannot, indeed, so far as our knowledge of Nature has as yet progressed, find any territory in it which is not subject to its mechanical law, or which separates itself from this world as a higher sphere, or as heaven. But this objection is now got rid of by the supposition that the worlds which God has made are many. On the one hand we need no longer try to find the higher world-order directly in the prolongation of this lower order; for it may exist now and here as an order of quite another kind, without intruding itself, or being noticeable in the course of the events of this world. On the other hand, we have no reason to regard these several world-orders as falling entirely outside one another; on the contrary, we must regard them as bound up together in the unity of God as parts of a higher plan. And although, therefore, we do not know in what way a finite spirit can pass from this order of earthly life into one of those

Higher Worlds may with this One Co-Exist in God.

higher spheres, yet we see that such a transition is possible, and the religious views and aspirations which bind up this earthly life with that higher perfection of the kingdom of heaven, though they admit not of being proved for certain by any philosophy, yet do not conflict, but rather entirely agree with those philosophical conceptions which this analysis of the idea of creation has led us to form.

LI.

The Creation of Spirits an Act of God's Will, and not an Emanation.

We cannot hope to know the *modus procedendi* by which the Divine being assured to spirits this independence. We cannot wish to define the exact way in which creation issued forth from the Creator, but only the import of the creative act; and the import is this: that in order to the existence of the spirit-world, which of itself is no natural consequence flowing from the being of God, a Divine will was necessary, and a determination of it which might not have been. And this is how the notion of creation differs from that of an emanation or development of the world. We cannot think of this divine

will, as if it were an historical act, which arose for the first time in God at a particular, though unassignable, moment, and had behind it a spiritual predilection on the part of God, whence its origin can be derived. All these attempts to write a history of the life which God led before creation, or to set forth the inner development by which He came to be a Creator are errors, and mix up the orderly connection and system of thoughts, by which little by little we seek to picture to ourselves the Divine being, with the genuine development of that being itself, and so confuse the history of our ideas of the thing with the history of the thing itself.

LII.

God did not *Labour* in Creating Us.

As a rule theologians are not contented with an act of the Divine will by which creation arose all at once, but represent that God worked or laboured at the creation of the world. Thus Tertullian writes, *Major est dei gloria, si laboravit.*

This requirement is an impossible one; for labour or toil presuppose as their essential con-

dition obstacles which are to be overcome. Such an obstacle the Divine being could not meet with outside Himself, unless there already existed a world independent on Him; and here we are speaking of a first creation of all outward reality. And it would be a fantastic and gratuitous blunder on our part to suppose that there were within God Himself, and in His own nature, inner obstacles which He had to overcome before He could resolve or carry out His resolution to create the world. On the other hand, religious feeling has ever regarded as God's motive in creating the world the expansive love which urges Him to communicate His holiness to other beings, and this thought entirely satisfies the yearning which led us to suppose that God laboured in creating the world; for according to it the creation arose not without His sympathy and enduring interest. It was not a matter-of-fact result flowing from the Divine will, nor was that will indifferent; rather it is true that God is bound up with creation by a perpetual sympathy, that He feels and lives in it.

His Motive was to Multiply His Own Holiness in Us.

LIII.

Folly of Cosmogonies.

Lastly, it results from the above consideration that so-called cosmogonies are inadmissible, and satisfy no religious end. For there cannot be any theory of the process which went on in creation, and therefore all distinctions are idle which we may try to make between a first creation, which gave rise to the formless matter of the world, and a second creation which called forth the forms of creatures. No less idle are the speculations of some philosophers who try to deduce creation from the Divine nature, showing how the phases of the latter opened out and revealed themselves in necessary sequence. The true motive of such speculations is not what their authors suppose, and they are really interested, not so much in the conditions and means through which the creative act was performed, as in the inner order, which prevails in this world, which has been willed by God. Thus, for example, the world is so ordered that we are not only able, but obliged, to distinguish in everything that really is between the matter and the form. But these

are logical abstractions which are not, so far as they mean anything, so related to one another as to imply that the formless, real matter was necessarily first, whereas the form was only added to it later, so as to render it something definite. This is as impossible as that there should be a movement which lacked a direction at first, and only acquired it later. We may just as well separate, in our thought of that movement, velocity and direction from one another, as separate form and matter in things.

These considerations do not, of course, affect those cosmogonies which are not meant to be descriptions of the first act of creation, but assume that a world has been made, and show how the earth developed therein into the dwelling-place of the human race; but of this more anon.

CHAPTER IV

UPON THE MAINTENANCE OF THE WORLD.

LIV.

Two Views: 1. God Maintains the World after Creating It.

It is customary to say that God, after creating the world, went on to perform a second action, namely, that He made Himself responsible for its maintenance. This view has its difficulty, and indeed two views are here combating one another. One of them is that God in maintaining the world continually re-creates it. This view, no doubt, is correct, in so far as it brings out the utter dependence of the world on God; but it does not make clear the alternative, the disaster which it fears would take place without this continually fresh creative activity. If what has once been created, cannot continue to exist, without being perpetually kept going, it is not easy to see

wherein consists the effectiveness of the created act; but if we once concede that what has been created does not immediately vanish away when the creative act ceases, but endures sometime longer, and only gradually decays, we give up in principle the view that the world maintains itself, and we have then to show from what source the dangers arise, which imperil the world, supposing it is not maintained by God. Now, such dangers cannot come from outside the world; and therefore they must be inherent in itself, which is tantamount to saying, that God must have created the world in such a way that its own intrinsic imperfection would bring it to nothing. Perhaps this thought may be of service in religion, but, if we allow it, we must remember that it does not agree with the other assumption that God maintains the world. On the contrary it is really the expression of quite another view, which is this : that the fate of what has once been created depends upon its own nature, so that it endures or passes away, according as it has or has not inner causes of decay; and in no case is there a renovating activity to make good its deficiencies.

LV

God Having Created, Leaves It Alone.

The other view admits that the world was created by God, but supposes that He then straightway withdrew from it and left it alone; but this view does not explain how we are to regard this independence in which the world was left by itself. We can understand in regard to a finite spirit, that it should separate itself from its work; when it does so, it bequeathes the task of maintaining the work to the universal order of the world, which is already there, and within which, and subject to whose laws, it fashioned and created its masterpiece. But such reasoning cannot be applied to God. And one must therefore regard the order of the world as the self-maintaining creation of God. But this would only be thinkable, if the order underwent no change, but for ever remained the same. Now, as a matter of fact the order of the world is a system or context of events and occurrences of such a kind that innumerable different things act differently upon one another at every moment; as we said before, it is such that we must sup-

pose there is a substantial unity of the several elements; and therefore, the mere existence of a so-called order, even if we understood how it could exist and maintain itself unaided, would not be adequate to explain the constant conjunction of changing events in nature. In connection with this we saw that if an element *a* is to produce the effect *w* upon another element *b*, this one substance must be present in *a* as well as in all other elements, and must intimate to *a*, which is as much acted on by as acting on *b*, that a case has arisen where the effect *w* must ensue.

LVI.

But Creation Implies Continuance.

Our general conclusion from the above is that the conception of the creation will not be complete, unless we comprise in it the idea that the created thing continues, just as we comprise the idea of persistency in the notion of movement. On the other hand, we must not forget that the continued existence of the thing created is inexplicable unless we suppose that the same will continues to act, which created these real elements, and is the basis and ground of their action upon one another.

It would not matter, therefore, how we ex-

pressed ourselves, only that there lies hidden in the favourite view that the world maintains itself a distinct tendency to deny as far as possible the dependency of nature upon God; if it has to be conceded that the world was created, yet it is pleasant to deny that the Divine being ever interferes in the subsequent course of phenomena. We do not think this is the right way to justify our objection to the belief in miracles. We must, on the contrary, assert that every process, however humble, which takes place in nature between one thing and another does so through the constant co-operation of the one true reality and through that alone. This reality we in religion term God; and therefore upon this theory and on these grounds it cannot be shown that God does not continually influence the course of nature, nor that the existing order of nature is inviolable. The decision of this question, however, lies in quite another field of investigation. It depends upon whether we are able to combine the exercise of miraculous power with the other attributes by which we define God in such a way that the exercise of that power would appear to be an alteration of the universal laws of nature.

Bearing of This on Miracles.

LVII

The usual refutations of miracles are mostly inconsistent with the meaning one really attaches to the word.

It is not true that a miracle involves a suspension of the laws of nature. On the contrary it implies that these laws continue to govern all the rest of the world and only seem not to do so as regards a particular event, which for that reason and no other contrasts with the rest of the course of nature. But even in reference to this particular event it is not true to say that it is a suspension of the *laws* of nature (in the plural). We cannot describe or define at all what really happens when a miracle occurs, unless we classify it and bring it under our general conceptions or categories of events, and this we cannot do without bringing the miraculous occurrence under certain laws of nature. Its peculiarity will then only consist in this: that it fulfils these laws with masses and measures and size-values (which belong to the elements other than those which co-operate to produce the miracle) in virtue of

Miracle the Suspension of One Law, not of Many.

their previous nature and of the conditions to which in the earlier and preceding course of events they were subject.

Consequently, when a miracle occurs, the Divine intervention has not for its real object to change the universal laws of nature. On the contrary, we must assume that these laws continue inviolable throughout the course of a world which has once been created. But the course of the world in its reality consists of something more than universal laws, which—we may add —have no existence of their own apart from the world. What we really have in the course of the world consists in the play of innumerable elements endowed with various forces, and, as these elements obey these laws,—to use the common phrase,—their respective forces act in various manners and on various scales. What these elements are, or what they are going to be, depends not on these necessary laws, but on the particular plan of the world, which God has chosen to make real among the many worlds which, without violation of those laws, were equally possible. Consequently, if this plan involves a change in the nature of the elements, there is no ordin-

ance of any kind to stand in the way of such a change.

In a miracle, therefore, God directly influences the inner nature of things, so that they undergo a change and—still obeying the same universal laws of nature—produce the miraculous effect, which without His influence they would not in mere obedience to those laws product.

LVIII.

This exposition was theoretically needful, but its result is not very cheering. Experience teaches us that there is a continuity in the course of nature which is never violated, and so long as we have faith in that continuity we have a fixed and unerring canon to regulate our investigations of and judgments about what happens in the course of the world. On the other hand we open the door to the most arbitrary superstitions, so soon as we try to rest miracles directly on a change in the laws or indirectly on a change in the things to which these laws apply

Experience Testifies to Continuity of Nature and Absence of Miracles.

We must therefore draw a firm distinction between the abstract and general possibility of

miracles and our disposition to believe that they really occur. If we examine into the why and the wherefore of this belief, it is clear that, if the world were mere *nature*, we could have no reason for assuming in it changes not already calculated upon in its source and principle. One could always insist that after being once created the elements do not bring about of their own capacity and according to an universal law the whole further development of nature; rather, one might insist that whatever new arises out of its condition in any particular moment is due to the constant co-operation of God from point to point. But this very co-operation one may regard as so perfectly steady and unbroken that it may be looked upon as an universal law, and held together with the ordinary mechanical view of nature without even making explicit mention of God. In regard to the evolution of organisms, natural philosophers actually assert the reality of some such co-operation, although their view is strenuously combated by those opposed to them.

We must accordingly entertain the idea of a sudden and instantaneous intrusion of Divine influence, only if the created world contains

seeds of internal decay, threatening a departure from the cosmic plan, and requiring to be counteracted. Nothing but the freedom which we ascribe to spiritual beings, and the ability which it implies to begin new series of events not conditioned by what precedes them, can supply this motive of compensating for inner decay by a sudden display of miracle.

LIX.

But neither does this take us very far. What shall be our scale of value in judging and deciding what inner spiritual events have so important a bearing on the plan of the world as to provoke the Divine intervention? We may be inclined to believe that fervent prayer has such a value, or we may think that such an enhancement of the interrelations between God and the world would naturally manifest itself at the birth of a new religion. Yet, who knows? Prayer.

In the absence, then, of grounds upon which to form a decision, we must allow full weight to experience, and the answer of experience is emphatically against miracles. Experience testifies that a sudden interruption of the course of

nature, involving a change in the modes in which physical elements act, never occurs. All that it would permit us to believe is that within our souls the immediate influence of God may cause changes, partly in the form of inspiration extending our knowledge or insight, partly in the form of a vision, in which we think we see objects not present to us, partly in the form of a strengthening of the will for self-sacrifice. By visions in the above sense we do not mean deceptions of sense simply due to the nature of the individual soul, but intuitions which are based on a present and real interaction of the soul with God, and bring visibly before the imagination the ideal content of that interaction; and these intuitions can neither arise within us unaided nor be an object of perception to other souls.

In what Sense Efficacious without Miracle.

CHAPTER V.

THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT OF THE WORLD.

LX.

Providence Implies Free Beginnings in the World.

ONE who regards the world as a system of causes and effects, in which there are no free beginnings, has no right to speak of it as being governed at all. One again who concedes such free beginnings would not have anything left for a power ruling the world to do, except to compensate the departures from a preconceived end which they involve. For what we can regard as the history of the world can only be the unfolding of definite germs already contained in the creation. The question therefore raised as to the government of the world does not so much concern a new *modus agendi* on the part of God, as the filling in of the order of development already fixed in and at the creation.

LXI.

Can the World Have a History?

The very idea, however, of a history of the world, has difficulties for us. Widespread philosophies and religions have not known this idea, and instead of regarding the change of the world as a progress whose end is distinguished from its beginning by its higher value, have seen in that world an endless and unceasing process of transformation of a supreme principle, in the course of which all that arises passes away again. It is chiefly through the influence of Christianity that this idea has grown up of a world-history developing towards a fixed end between the limits of creation and day of judgment.

As May Have a Finite Being.

The latter view most commends itself to religious feeling. In the case of a finite being it is clear enough what is meant by a successive realisation of *its* aims and ends; for of its unaided will it can realise nothing, but has to employ the forces of an already existing outside world, and, what is more, every finite being emerges in a definite part of the system of the world, is conditioned by

what goes before it in that system and helps to condition what follows it. But these considerations apply not to God, whose will, once declared unto Himself, needs not to be realised piecemeal and in succession, as it does for us, who must submit our activity to the existing conditions of a time that passes by and to a world which exists therein. Whatever resolutions, therefore, the Divine will contains, are thereby already real with all the reality of which we can think, and are in no wise beholden to the future. It is not then consistent with a right notion of God, or of a supreme principle at all, that we should attribute to Him in His own self a history in time, or think that for Him there are ends not yet real, but waiting to be made real through a succession of events. For until such a Divine end be fulfilled we must, supposing that for the Divine being it contains something which definitely ought to be, suppose in Him a want, and after it was fulfilled there would, so far as we can see, be nothing left to the arbitrament of God, whom we yet think of as a *living* being.

The Absolute or God Cannot Have a History.

LXII.

Relation of Time to God a Mystery.

Apart from religious needs it is difficult to understand how time stands and in what relation to the highest principle of the world, be this what it may.

It strains the imagination and yet it is possible to apprehend the entire world, so far as it appears to us in space, as due to purely intelligible, but not sensible, differences and distinctions of reality within those parts thereof which we call spirits. We cannot conceive of how this presumably timeless content dilates itself into the succession as which it manifests itself to us, without at any rate adding in our minds the thought of a succession of our ideas and representations of it. Here then within our souls we must regard the course of time as really occurring, although we think it away from the outer world which is object of our perception.

Nevertheless, we are ever driven back on some such attempt. We cannot understand what we call past and future in reference to particular states or events, except by representing infinite time itself as a first reality, through whose

different sections the procession of events moves on, in such wise that the past is ever more than something which has simply not happened, is something which continues to belong to the universal reality, as part however of a past which we think of as real, though no longer present. Now we deem it altogether impossible to retain the idea of an independent time existing in its own right; we can picture it, but not think it. Yet the need which it represents abides; for we cannot believe, that in the whole of the world the past has no place, and that the future has none either. If it were so the entire reality would be in perpetual change and flux—a perpetual here and now, and no more.

This need of one real place where the past stores itself up, and of another where the future awaits to manifest itself, has in all ages led philosophers to raise the truly existent above the course of time, at the same time that they have thought that a time-progression takes place within its being and essence. We cannot hope to understand how this demand of metaphysic can be fulfilled; when, therefore, the same demand crops up again in the philosophy of religion as well, we cannot wonder at its here

also transcending the scope of human knowledge and taking its place as a mystery of the Divine being.

LXIII.

God Eternal not as Out-lasting Time,

These reflections suggest the joint attributes of God—eternity of being and omniscience.

The former of these must not be taken merely in the sense of duration in time, for none but a finite being would be eternal in the sense of lasting for ever in time. We saw that by the singleness of God is not meant a numerical unity, that the latter is, in fact, subordinate to a universal notion of God. In the same way His eternity does not signify a victorious struggle with claims set up by time to exist before Him and apart. It really expresses a being not in time at all, a being which, because it is just what it is, is the ground and origin of time-succession, just as it is of the distinction between possible and impossible. We can form no idea of how this can happen, nor can we bring it before the imagination in any way, and are therefore obliged to be content to append to

but as Founding Time.

this mere postulate of eternity the further attribute of unchangeableness, by way of bringing out that the passage of time, even if it does belong to God, yet in no way determines His nature.

The other attribute of omniscience is easy to understand, but is not worth ascribing to God, if it only means the knowledge of universal laws according to which the world must take its course. If, however, we assume that there are in the world free beginnings, such as those made by man, the question arises, "How can a future be known, of which it is not certain that it will ever come to pass?"

How Reconcile Divine Omniscience with Free Beginnings?

The answer which has been attempted, that "God foresees future free actions as future and free," is not permissible, so long as we liken the Divine intelligence to the human.

Nor can we evade the problem by saying that the very distinction between Divine knowledge and our own consists in this, that it can compass what we can not. We are at once thrown back on the position that this knowledge does not itself share in that characteristic of being in time which it perceives in its objects.

Knowledge, yet not Fore-knowledge, of Free Beginnings is Conceivable.

Let us conceive that the entire reality, which for us unfolds itself as a succession, is present all at once to the eye of God. Then what is not really future, but only seems future in the object, will be perceived by God not as an uncertainty, but as something real, nor will its character as free be impaired thereby. In brief, a knowledge of what is free is possible, but a fore-knowledge of it is inconceivable. Further than this we cannot go, for we cannot construe to ourselves better than this that timeless imagination which is God's; and so we must reckon in omniscience with those postulates as to which we know not how they can be fulfilled.

LXIV.

In what Sense God Governs the World.

The conclusion to be drawn from the above is that we cannot speak of God's governing the world in the sense that there is a series of actions performed by God one after another and constituting His life one of succession. Rather, what we can indicate as the aim of the world and goal of His government is an end constantly fulfilled and con-

stantly fulfilling itself. End or aim we cannot ascribe to Him in the ordinary sense of something which once was not and has to be realised; though we may ascribe it in the other sense in which it is distinct from a mere *result*, is something *willed* by God.

If we take it in the latter and legitimate sense, the question at once arises: "What is the content of this world-aim?" and to this question we can return but a general and formal answer. We saw that, if by creation was meant the production of a kind of reality—which is what we mean by a real created world as distinct from one which only exists in the Divine thought—then there was no creation save of a world of spirits. We must, therefore, look for the end of the world in something which can be and take place in or through or for spirits.

The End Willed by God for the World Must Be Something Spiritual,

LXV

This closes the merely theoretical deductions which we can make from the notion of a highest principle, be this what it may. Any further development of our notion must have other roots

than mere theory. Henceforth, we can only determine *à priori* and without going to experience, what concrete qualities belong to the supreme principle, by consulting the needs and claims of the affections and of the heart. And these may be summed up by saying that the highest principle cannot be otherwise designated than as that which has absolute value and worth; and no other aim than the realising of the highest worth can be ascribed to God as the motive of His creation, and the principle of order in what He creates.

And It Must Have Moral Worth or Value,

LXVI.

The only way in which theory can determine this highest worth or value is to analyse the notion itself.

Theory assures us that there can be no talk of worth, either in a world which contained no spirits to recognise it, or in a world of spirits equipped only with theoretical knowledge of actual circumstances and relations, but incapable of taking an interest in what they knew in the form of pleasure and pain.

Our view may be summed up, then, in the following words: the generation of a matter-of-fact to be known, of a definite relation between various elements, of a serial order of events—all this has in itself no true value and cannot be regarded as an end, which, if appointed for the world, would satisfy our souls. What we mean by *value* in the world lies wholly in the *feeling* of *satisfaction* or of *pleasure* which we experience from it. As to all these formal facts one can ask, why exactly they, and not others instead of them, exist in the world? But such a question is absurd in regard to pleasure or blessedness. We cannot ask why just these and not rather their equivalents should form the ultimate end of the world.

And Not Lie in the Realising of Any Speculative Idea.

Entertaining these convictions, we would reject as untrue all those views which conflict with them. Thus, the highest and secret import and aim of the world cannot be to realise a mode of dialectical development, cannot be the "passing of the *idea* from being-in-itself through being-for-another unto being-for-itself"; nor can the primal ground of creation and its ordering principle be found in the mere production of self-consciousness, or

It Cannot Be, *e.g.*, a Dialectical Process of Thought.

in the perpetual struggle of the real, not only to *be*, but to *possess itself*. We must rather adopt the old religious view which finds in the loving will of God both the ground and reason of a creation of a world of spirits within whom the true glory of God can be an infinitely diversified enjoyment, and of an order of phenomena helping as means to bring this about.

LXVII.

Yet this End of the World Cannot Be Abstract or General Pleasure or Bliss.

But this notion of pleasure or blessedness in general is still an empty abstraction acquired by us through reflection on the particular objects which, in our experience, have realised it. We must not suppose that it lies in this abstract form in the mind of God as an end forethought to be made real in the world.

Besides which, we know that in our own lives there is no such thing as pleasure in general, attaching as a state discernible apart to an external stimulus, and not in its own nature and in essential ways determined by that stimulus. Every real pleasure is different from every other, just as one colour is from another. And even as the

latter are not modifications of an imaginary universal colour, nay, even as this universal colour itself is but a secondary abstraction of what is common to the various colours, and having no reality apart from them ; so, whenever we really feel pleasure, we but recognise and enjoy a peculiar specific value, attaching to *its* stimulus and to no other. Pleasure in general, on the other hand, answers to the colour which never exists as such.

We must not then assume that in God there first exists an idea of pleasure as yet general and formless, and that He subsequently looks for forms through which to realise it. Without separation or loss of unity the Divine activity issues in an inexhaustible wealth of forms, which to us, when in our reflection we compare them, appear to have been calculated for this presupposed end of universal pleasure, whereas in fact each of them directly and of itself represents a special value, which is for God Himself an object of peculiar and definite pleasurableness, and affects ourselves with a feeling which is a more or less remote copy of His.

In this way our notion of God ceases to be that of an empty supreme principle, and receives

a living content, to express which we may use the phrases—however inadequate—of creative phantasy (indicating that He *generates* forms) or of Divine soul, indicating that the worth of the forms generated is an object of self-satisfaction to God. And here at last we see the meaning of the predicate *blessed* which we give to God. In heathen religions this predicate meant the enjoyment which God or the gods have of their own beauty. In the Christian religion it is limited to refer to ethical qualities which we must mention later on.

It may seem as if our notion of God was still incomplete, because we have not comprised therein the ethical qualities, which are so all-important for our comprehension of human life.

LXVIII.

Connection of Good with Pleasure.

This is a point on which we have more to say later on. Now we merely remark that the notion of good cannot be separated from that of pleasure. It is true, of course, that desire for one's own pleasure should not be one's motive. But in the world, as a whole, one cannot regard things as obeying cer-

tain universal laws of conduct without reference to an ultimate end of independent value. There cannot be a law compelling one set of conditions, *a*, indifferent for all the world, to generate through conduct another set, *b*, equally indifferent; nor compelling the preference of one form of action, *a*, bringing enjoyment to none, to another, *b*, which would distress nobody. Somewhere or other, then, the entire fabric of the world must conduce to blissfulness as its goal.

To God the Good Is Nothing Obligatory as It Is to Man.

For us men the idea of the good is a definite one, because it denotes a feeling of obligation attaching in our consciences to certain modes of conduct. For God, however, the good which we regard as one of His essential attributes cannot lie in an obligation, but must directly constitute His nature. And we shall be sure of a reason for honouring and reverencing His nature, if it is such as to directly evidence its worth, namely, if it is conduct and activity motived by love and goodness, and rewarded by enjoyment of the good things and of the blessedness produced.

LXIX.

The Divine Holiness.

The fluctuating character of our conception of God's holiness has to do with this.

The meaning of holiness is clear enough. It signifies something which our conscience forbids us to seize or know, to employ or otherwise entangle in our actions. But this merely indicates the attitude we subjectively assume towards what is holy, and does not define what it is in itself. It is not surprising, therefore, that this subjective sense of holiness should itself be transformed into one of objective import, as is done when the true nature of what is holy is taken to lie in a character of unfathomable holiness, and this in turn is made a predicate of some conditions in the being or actions of God, which we can only apprehend in theory and in formal manner. If, however, we could really see through these conditions, we would still have to allow, that as mere matters of fact, they would be quite indifferent, for their value would lie not in a positive content on their part which claimed our reverence, but in the charm of mystery they possessed. Here, then, is a by-path leading to worship of

the unknown. Let us avoid it, because it is unknown, and be content to find no other concrete filling for the notion of God's holiness than we did for that of His blessedness. Only we may make this formal addition, that though we cannot help attributing to God the ideas of evil and of unholy activities, yet there can be no motive even tempting Him to deviate from that which seems right to us men, and is the only clue we have to guide our conduct.

LXX.

Three Principles in the World: 1, Necessary Truths: 2, The Real World: 3, Final Cause.

Cast our eye over the foregoing and we cannot deny that our view of the world ultimately leads back to three starting-points, which we must suppose are united in the highest principle; although we cannot by any mental effort understand how they are one. Primarily all depends on the universal laws and eternal truths which are for us self-evident necessities of thought. But they by themselves give no reason for a world. True, the real follows these laws, but it cannot be deduced from them; and its definite forms must be referred to a wholly different source. Lastly, if we permit at all the notion

of a final cause of the world, we can gather nothing positive about what it is from the forms reality assumes. The same reality might be employed to bring about other ends, and the same end may permit of being realised in other ways.

The religious imagination, however, is not usually content to admit this problem to be insoluble. It nearly always tries to exhibit, at any rate by means of symbols, an inner economy or history of the Divine being which, in addition to merely recognising the riddle, presupposes a solution of it and presents the imagination with a more or less formal picture of that solution. Not only the three starting-points we have mentioned, but other ruling views of the world, as, for instance, that which sees in it a perpetual arising out of the formless and return thereunto, have in different religions and in different senses given rise to the idea of a trinity in unity of God.

Doctrine of the Trinity.

The Christian dogma of the Trinity we regard as an attempt to guard against the extravagant and, in practice, noxious fancies of Eastern heathen and gnostic speculation. By setting up a formula, which at once

recognises that there is here a riddle insoluble by the human understanding, and refrains as much as possible from defining the unknown to the imagination by means of symbolic ideas, the Christian religion sets a limit to such fanciful speculation. Further attempts to win a positive knowledge of the meaning of this dogma have been made in all manner of ways, but they all belong to mere philosophy of religion and are not part of any revelation recognised as Divine. It is, therefore, permissible if we on our part make the dogma in question do duty for us and set up in connection with it a doctrine which—without, indeed, bringing before the mind any positive knowledge in our sense—will merely serve to remind us in a manner appealing to the imagination that we are here confronted with an insoluble problem

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE ACTUAL COURSE OF THE WORLD.

LXXI.

How far Experience Confirms our Idea of God as a Moral Being.

THUS far we have tried to define the notion of God in a twofold way: on the one hand according to its metaphysical implications; on the other hand according as it answers to the moral needs and demands of the heart, for which the religious consciousness requires satisfaction. The task now awaits us of investigating how far these later additions made by religion to the notion of a supreme being, but not involved in it as necessities of thought, are borne out by reality. We have nothing but data of experience from which to answer this question, and we must therefore bear in mind how limited are these data. They are purely those of an

Experience Limited.

earthly experience, and beyond this we only know that outside of and beyond our earth stretches an unlimited reality. It is waste of time making guesses about the drift and

contents of the other spheres which the world includes; only we must not forget that they are there in countless multitudes, and that we know nothing about them. Otherwise we are likely to make the mistake—so common in philosophy and ordinary religious views—of confusing the niggling economy of our earthly existence with the history of the entire great world, to which we would really direct our thoughts, although in fact we cannot.

One of the first duties imposed on us by our modern knowledge of the cosmos is that of giving up our traditional ideas of a dwelling place of God, of a heaven which we can fix geographically, of a hell and so forth; and the general ideas which underlie these old beliefs must be cleared of these encumbrances and given their proper expression.

LXXII.

Physical Speculations on the Beginning and End of the World have no Religious Bearing.

This attitude of cautious reserve must in particular be taken up with regard to the histories of the world which—such is the tendency of modern research—are beginning to absorb an undue share of the religious interest of people.

Of the theoretical cosmogonies of the present day not one really goes back to a first principle. The idea that the planetary system arose out of an incandescent gas uniformly rotating always leaves the questions open as to whence came the state of movement of the atoms implied in their incandescence, and whence, furthermore, the uniform direction of the rotation of this nebular gas. Even if we extend this nebular hypothesis to the whole world, it does not explain the origin of its present construction, and we must go back to a still more remote epoch of the world, or to creation itself, to explain the genesis of the primary data, which have evolved their later results in the way described.

Just as little do such theories throw any light on the end of all things. Various views are broached from time to time of how the world will be little by little burned up, or of how it will sink into the torpor of eternal cold, but they are arithmetical calculations, and no more, of what must ultimately happen, if one or another of the physical laws, which we know by experience, operates perpetually without intervention of a transforming cause. We can not say with our imperfect knowledge of nature that

such a cause will never intervene and act, nor indeed that it is not already at work, neutralising and defeating the neatly executed calculations of theoretical results.

Moreover, all this when thoroughly considered is seen to have absolutely no bearing upon religion, and it is vain to try to connect or ally theology with any of the changing fashions of natural science. It cannot strengthen articles of religious faith to make them depend on the latest discoveries of physics; we must rather confine these articles to what is in any case universally true and valid, be the particular forms what they may, under which they may be found in experience to be realised.

LXXIII.

Upon Evolution.

Nor does the inner constitution of the existing world throw any light on our problem, however much ground it may afford us for admiration. To prove that there is therein what we choose to call a development, is not to gain an understanding of it which has any religious value. A finite being which itself shares in such a development may conceivably take an interest therein. It *enjoys* the transition

from a less to a more complete condition. But looking to the world as a whole, it is not so clear who or what reaps any increase of joy from the fact that later forms and subjects are more perfect than earlier ones. The enthusiasts who prate of a perpetual progress in the world hardly know what they are talking about.

It is not Progress,

Have they ever shown that this process of becoming what is aimed at, of coming to be the end, is nobler, finer, or more estimable than a restitution ever beginning afresh of a state of perfection?

If we glance at living creatures, we find that the presumably lower grades of life, instead of disappearing when the higher grades are evolved, continue to exist alongside of them, and present us with a classified system of co-existent genera. That is interesting to zoologists. But, as the world was not made merely for natural philosophers, we may ask: to what good can such an arrangement lead? We can hardly think of any other than this: that every combination of conditions arising in nature has a living species answering to it, and taking

And Must Aim at the Realisation of as much Good as is Possible in Individuals.

a specific delight in that combination. In other words, the gradations of creatures are so various, because there would be less good realised in the world by one and the same creature enjoying all conditions alike, than by the distribution of the enjoyment among different creatures, of which each has in this way a separate value for itself.

LXXIV.

Modern controversies about the origin of man are of equally little importance for us. Once it is established that all physical action, even of the humblest kind, only goes on under Divine assistance, the greater value and nearer relation to God, which we ascribe to man, is not prejudiced by the peculiar mode of origin, which, upon the testimony of experience, we are obliged to admit for the whole race. It, therefore, makes no difference from a religious point of view what natural science may find out about his origin. That simpler organisations develop into higher ones cannot be denied, and though we cannot find out the exact way in which they do so, we must,

The Origin of Man.

anyhow, reject the wilfully irreligious view that the development is no more than a series of accidents. This view is theoretically absurd. For, even if we assume a being to be indefinitely variable, an external condition which is to give it a definite bias or direction, *a*, can only do so, if the organism, instead of being utterly devoid of definite character, has a distinct nature of its own, which supplies to the condition influencing it the secondary premise through which, as in a syllogistic inference in logic, the bias is determined towards *a*, and not towards *b*. In other words, we cannot ascribe to all beings the same indefinite variability, but each can only alter within a definite number of directions suited to its special nature, and a variation which has once taken place will help to determine the sort and scale of future variations; so that, theoretically, so far from the assumed development being a mere accumulation of groundless variations, it must be accounted for by the latent possibilities of the being.

Absurdity of View that Development is Through a Series of *Accidents*.

LXXV.

More serious are the questions arising out of the reality of evil and badness; for the order of the world, if it is to answer to the above ideal of God, must be a flawless realisation of the highest good. The Problem of Evil in the World.

The usual answer to these questions is to write a theodicy, and it is no answer at all. Thereby we try and try in vain to deny that the evil is there, and to minimise it to a degree that is endurable. It is vain to say that evil is a mere deficiency of good, for this deficiency or negation is no whit the less painful on that account; and it is in the pain and not in the matter-of-fact, or want of matter-of-fact, out of which the pain arises, that we see the true evil. The Evil is Real,

It is equally useless to explain evil and badness as relative, and to think that, though we call it painful, it will, in the eyes of God, be in perfect accord with the harmonious plan of the world. What consolation is this to finite beings from whom this harmony is hidden, while the smart of the found and felt want of harmony remains unhealed? And not a Relative or Disguised Good.

Cruelty in the Animal Creation.

Lastly, it is incorrect to regard physical evil simply as something accessory and accidental. It does not come intermittently, but, on the contrary, the whole animal creation is systematically based on the extermination of one creature by another, and on a cruelty typified in their instincts.

LXXVI.

Belief in a Devil Natural, but no Solution;

The reality of evil being recognised as incontestable, the next effort we naturally make is to look for its origin outside God. Either we regard the world as not His creation, or we set up a bad principle within the world and suppose that it runs counter to Him. This belief in a devil is very natural, but from a theoretical point of view, very barren. It is inconceivable that there should be two alien principles in the same world conflicting in their activities, without there being a third and higher principle than either to decide what shall result as the upshot of their conflict. These two principles would be, therefore, opposed as demons, and would inevitably be subordinate to a third, which

For It Involves a Dualism which is Unthinkable.

would be the real God, and we are left with the same conclusion as before, that even the bad is not outside God, but must, after all, have its roots in Him.

LXXVII.

The Source of the Evil in God Himself.

We are thus constrained to seek the origin of evil in God Himself, and in such a way as not to conflict with His holiness.

To talk of what is in God yet is not in Himself, as Schelling does in connection with evil, of a hidden ground and so forth, is simply to re-state our problem and not to solve it.

Leibnitz on Origin of Evil.

The thought pursued by Leibnitz is somewhat clearer: that before the consciousness of God there hovers a multitude of plans of a world, each of which contains a manifold of elements and events in an order admitting of no change, so as to be capable of becoming real, or not becoming real, just as it is or not at all. Of these worlds God is supposed to have chosen the relatively best. In other words, the mere character of finiteness entails that no one of these inner orders of a

world should be without any evil at all. This last position however is quite unintelligible. That a thing is finite may lead to a want of good, but cannot be a reason for that want or deficiency assuming the positive character of evil.

C. H. Weise, in a work entitled "Philosophical Dogmatics; or the Philosophy of Christendom," Leipzig, 1855-1862, has given a new and acute expression to this view in supposing that the eternal truths, which are present to the mind of God, and are as necessary to His intelligence as to our finite spirits, set an essential limit to His omnipotence. We may take no exception to this reasoning, and yet we must reject as wholly groundless and unsupported by experience the assumption that, because these eternal and universal truths hold good, therefore the evil is unavoidable. All mathematical, mechanical and physical truths might remain true, and yet there need not be any evil in the world on that account. The evil is rather due to the nature, to the receptivity, to the inner changeability, to the outward relations of different beings, and to the directions and velocities with which these forces meet, in other words, to things merely given

which might be otherwise, and whose reality depends on the Divine activity and not on the limits in which that activity must have acquiesced.

LXXVIII.

Is Freedom of Will Origin of Evil?

Another view tries to find the origin of evil in the freedom to sin conceded to finite and created spirits.

Neither experience nor *a priori* theory lend any colour to the assumption that the sin of man produced physical evil in the order of nature. The view attracts men on account of its mystic and unintelligible character, but has no other recommendations.

On the other hand there is no denying the quantity of suffering which bad actions bring upon others. Even if we suppose that it was part of the original plan of the world that an evil will should be possible therein, it is still an insoluble mystery that that will should be allowed to act outside of itself, and that there should not be in the order of the world a constant agency at work to ward off suffering from the innocent.

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LXXIX.

Does God Sanction Evil as a Discipline?

There remains but one view to consider: that which considers that God allowed evil to exist in the world as a means to the education of mankind.

This view also presupposes the freedom of the finite will; for otherwise tendencies and inclinations could not have arisen in man's soul alien to the Divine purpose, and therefore requiring His guiding and correcting hand; just as the passions and inclinations of youth require the controlling hand of the human educator, who takes charge of him as of a being fashioned by an order of things alien to and independent on himself.

Even if under such a presupposition it is permissible to think that God educates the individual person, we must at least allow that the true goal of this education is far from clear to us. It can anyhow not consist in a mere resignation or surrender to evil, but must lie in something which not only compensates the pain which, when it has once been suffered, cannot ever be taken back again, but must also justify as inevitable its having been felt.

On the other hand, we find no reasonable support in experience for the assumption that regards physical evil merely as a means of education. On the contrary, the want of proportion between deserts and happiness has always been regarded as a reason for our believing in the existence of a God who is able to redress the balance. This view, however, like the rest, allows that the disproportion actually exists, without doing anything to reconcile its existence with the notion of God.

Existence of Evil Inexplicable on Any Theory of Divine Goodness.

It follows, and it is a conclusion which we must definitely pronounce, that there is no theory or speculation which can reconcile the existence of evil with a perfectly good God. If, however, we are convinced that this problem is insoluble, we must take seriously the statement which we often hear made: that the reason for a method of guidance which we cannot understand lies in the unscrutable wisdom of God.

LXXX.

Reflection upon human history gives us no better explanation than this.

Idea of a History of Man Agrees Little with Divine Goodness.

That there should be a history at all is a mystery to us. If we say that it is the vocation of the spirit not to be immediately and at once, but to become, that which it ought to be, still the advantage or good of becoming exists only for the consciousness which embraces all phases of the process. We might say of God that for Him history is the drama in which His own being unfolds itself. And this is how those views have been understood, which try to show that there is in the history of the world a dialectical development out of one another of sequent ideas. Such views overlook the fact that, if this drama be visible to God alone, they contradict our idea of His goodness; for this development is not realised through mere puppets and shadows, but through living spirits who do not grasp the import of the drama, and yet feel the suffering which it involves.

LXXXI.

So also the View that History is Education of Mankind.

The same objection holds good against the view that history is the education of mankind.

Education has no meaning, unless there is a

personal subject who remains the same throughout, and passes from a less to a more perfect state. For certain purposes of moral theory we can regard mankind as something real in this collective sense. A true and living reality, however, it only has for and in the several human beings who come and go, generation after generation, and we cannot conceive of an education which constantly changes the material on which it works, throwing away the imperfectly trained, and accumulating the fruits of education for future generations who have not earned them, while the earlier generations which helped to win them have no participation in them.

LXXXII.

Man's Progress Except in Science Questionable.

In making the above remarks we took for granted that a continual progress is at least indisputable. This assumption we must now take back. The only sort of progress which incontestably takes place is in our knowledge of nature and our command over it as a means to the realisation of our desires. There is nothing in this progress, how-

ever, to make us feel that it must have been won by spiritual effort. No one has intellectual command of the whole of science, and the greater number of us enjoy its fruits without any knowledge of who won them, and without thanking them.

Lastly, it may be true that the general consciousness of what is right and wrong, recognised morality, as we call it, has grown more perfect with the lapse of time; but the moral character of the living man has not made any demonstrable progress; nor does any unprejudiced person think it likely that the future will bring about any essential change therein.

At the same time our increasing control over nature, and the greater security it provides against natural evils, leads to no end which we can discern. It cannot indefinitely increase the productivity of the earth; and, therefore, our belief in the continuance of the race rests on the secret assumption that the evils which now act as a check on population will also continue, without, however, increasing to such an extent as to imperil the existence of those who remain.

LXXXIII.

Pessimism as a Theory Equally Tenable with Optimism.

These very results of our consideration form the ground upon which in all ages pessimistic thinkers have rested their conclusions. They concede everything which can be theoretically established as to the single all-embracing power, which we found we had to presuppose in order to understand the world's course, but they deny the right to transform the notion of this power into a god by adding thereto predicates of goodness. On the contrary, they see in the course of the world nothing but the blind development of an original ground or principle, which far from setting itself the task of realising what is joyful, is rather conscious in the individual spirits of its unhappiness, and leaves nothing for them but the wish for their own annihilation.

In such views there is a great deal of exaggeration, and an utter ignoring of the good things which, after all, reality does provide along with the evils. But it must be allowed that on purely theoretical grounds there is as much to be said for the pessimistic as for the optimistic view, and

that the latter rests only on our conception of God.

Religious Belief must Rest on Moral Attitude.

But from a scientific point of the view, pessimism is not the most profound, but rather a cheap and superficial view, because it simply gives up that which it cannot prove, and denies that there is a riddle, merely because it cannot solve it.

If we, therefore, after and in view of our entire renunciation of theoretic proof, are still convinced of the necessity and truth of religious faith, we must consider this faith as an attitude of moral character. And religion really begins for us with this feeling theoretically unproveable, yet still recognised by us, a feeling of duty, or of being bound by this infinite whose truth we cannot theoretically demonstrate.

CHAPTER VII.

RELIGION AND MORALITY.

LXXXIV.

How Far Can the Moral Conscience Serve as Basis of Religion?

If there is no theoretic demonstration forthcoming for religious conviction, yet there must be a motive for retaining this conviction. This is furnished by an appeal to direct and inner experience, which asserts the truth of these religious intuitions just as directly and without the intervention of logic, as the perceptions of the senses attest the reality of outward objects. But as we said above in the introduction, there is no one inner experience, recognised by all, of this divine order of the world not perceptible by the senses; the only feeling common to all men, to which we could appeal as the foundation of religion, consists in the dictates of conscience, which yet only assert directly what should be, though indirectly sanctioning an inference from this about that which is.

LXXXV.

How We Come by General Moral Principles.

There are various conceptions of the office of conscience. We must allow that conscience is not a consistent revelation, anterior to all experience, of commands which our future action has to follow. It resembles rather our faculty of cognition. The highest principles to which our judgment of things leads us back are no original and ready-made possession of our consciousness; our particular perceptions lead us at first in the way of immediate reaction to connect them in a definite order and sense. Later reflection on many single cases shows us on what principles our previously only instinctive action proceeded; and then they become conscious principles which we henceforth follow in our further knowledge. In the same way conscience is moved to single verdicts of approval or disapproval by the contemplation of single fixed cases. The reflective comparison of these single verdicts forms from them those general moral prescriptions which we then term the direct voice of conscience.

LXXXVI.

Upon the psychological evolution of our conscience, which we must perforce allow, is apt to be based a view which destroys the binding value and the true majesty of moral commands.

Prudential View of Morality

The soul approves or disapproves of an action in virtue of its susceptibility to an immediate feeling of pleasure or pain which it experiences therefrom. Later on when it comes to frame general propositions, it only sets store by those maxims, by steadily following which it has learned from experience that it is certain on the average to reach the highest degree and the most enduring length of the pleasure or self-satisfaction which is all it can attain to. All moral precepts are thus made to appear to be maxims of prudence, general formulæ of the best way to get on; and they only seem to be universal laws, because our experience of the past, present, and future is too limited to allow of our finding rules and modes of conduct specially adapted for the attainment in every single case of the highest possible good.

This much of truth must be conceded to this way of regarding morality: namely that the experience of human intercourse can alone supply a concrete and definite filling in of those general precepts, in following which moral conduct consists. It is vain to try, as the opponents of utilitarianism do, to derive those specialised precepts from the universal notions of what is good, holy, moral, or right. These universal notions express nothing more than the peculiar impression which particular kinds of action, when we first become aware of them, make upon our soul; on the other hand they do not teach us to know the forms of action to which this impression attaches.

Rightly Refers Us to Human Intercourse for Knowledge of what is Right and Wrong in Action.

LXXXVII.

The disposition to regard moral rules simply as prudential maxims won by experience and to attribute all conduct to selfish motives cannot be combated by theory. Only this much is clear, that such an interpretation of moral commands is arbitrary. For even if we do assume that these commands have

Real Basis of Morality is Self-denying Benevolence.

an intrinsic value and holiness, nothing is changed. I mean to say that they would still actually be the maxims, by following which the greatest sum of happiness is secured. Still, as before, the particular actions which they enjoin would have to be learned by experience, as was stated above. And for that very reason it would still be always possible to represent these moral commands as if they were nothing more than empirical doctrines of what is useful. But, as a fact, we place in direct contrast to that mode of action which only follows these maxims of prudence, another mode as alone of intrinsic value, that, namely, which follows the same rules, but in another spirit, a spirit which considers and desires the establishment of good in the same unselfish manner, in which, for instance, we admire beauty as something objectively of worth without any idea of its usefulness to us, or in a spirit which, in so far as it strives after the production of happiness, finds this happiness only in acts of benevolence towards others and not in egotism. This too may be denied; but then we deny an inner experience on the acknowledgment of which every further religious aspiration is based. Conversely those who are conscious of this

inner experience are no less incapable of refutation.

LXXXVIII.

Stoical View Unsatisfactory.

But neither does the recognition of the intrinsic worth and holiness of moral commands lead straight to a religious point of view; on the contrary, alike in ancient and modern times it has been bluntly opposed to religious ideas as to something false and unnecessary. Practically this stoicism or rationalism which despises all religious connection may, by its mere submission to the general laws of morality and of the universe, form the foundation for a very worthy and elevated conduct of life. None the less there is in such a position a peculiar theoretical contradiction.

For, in the first place, it would push aside all speculations as to the origin, whatever it may be, or the final goal of moral laws, on the ground that such speculation must impair the conception of the intrinsic holiness and unconditional obligatoriness of these laws. It is a lofty disposition which so utters itself, yet one which reposes on a theory of morals which is not altogether true or useful. We can think of

laws which are utterly unconditioned, in the sense that they govern all reality like laws of nature, and are consequently the expression of a *must* which knows of no exceptions. On the other hand we cannot intelligibly think of an unconditioned *should be*, that is to say, of a law to which reality of itself in no way corresponds.

That which should be or ought to be, must have a reality distinct from that which should not be; and this distinction cannot merely consist in our withholding one or the other of these opposed predicates. More than this, that the one should be and the other should not must have practical force and validity. In other words and simpler, we may put it thus: an unconditioned *should* or *ought to* be is unthinkable; and only a conditioned *should be* is possible, because it alone holds out advantages and disadvantages to those who follow or disregard a precept. These results, however, themselves can ultimately only consist in pleasure or unhappiness; and in this alone consists the absolute worth which is possessed by the ideals pointed out by moral laws. A value appreciated by no one and consisting in pleasure and pain for no one is,

Because It Makes Mere Fulfilment of Law as Law the End rather than Satisfaction of a Living Self.

as we saw above, something which contradicts itself.

The stoics put forward as the ideal of life for the wise an immobility of character, in Greek phrase *ataraxy*, which they associated indissolubly with the absolute and unconditional obligatoriness of moral precept, and which is supposed to be an advantage. We answer that, even if this be a praiseworthy type of character in itself, still its consequences are not at all praiseworthy; for it excludes a lively enthusiasm for the good and beautiful, and by suppressing the feelings, sinks the spirit into the mere manifestation of an impersonal substance. Lastly, so far as we reached this ataraxy by following the moral laws, the latter would be really maxims of utility, by following which an egoistic well-being is to be attained.

Nevertheless, not only the repose of soul, but also the self-respect engendered by following out the moral laws is in a vague way preferred as a last aim and final good. This of itself almost points to conclusions which are religious. If we consider the single person as a mere natural product, appearing and vanishing, there seems no cause why we should insist that what

we honour as good and holy should be realised in this *I*. Self-respect can only be understood as a final aim, if it form part of what gives us pleasure egoistically, like any satisfaction of the senses. It can only have another meaning, if we change our conception of our personality and its position in the world.

LXXXIX.

The above reflections have not of course the force of demonstrative proofs, but can merely serve to bring home to our minds the connection in which alone the particular thoughts sketched out become quite satisfactory. They point to three propositions which we may regard as the characteristic convictions of every religious mind, in contrast with a merely theoretical understanding of things. These propositions are as follows:

Theological Implications of Common Morality.

1. Moral laws embody the will of God.

2. Individual finite spirits are not products of nature, but are children of God.

3. Reality is more and other than the mere course of nature, it is a kingdom of God.

We must explain these three propositions and examine their consequences.

XC.

Relation of Divine Will to Moral Law Examined.

Objections have been raised to the first of these propositions, which admit of being reduced to the well-known scholastic alternative: is the good good, because God wills it, or does He will it, because it is good? We had to decide similar questions in regard to the validity of the eternal truths and by the light of their analogy let us look at the question now before us.

If we answer the first clause of the antithesis with a yes, it may be asked: What is meant by the God who in this case is said to will? Is He more than an infinite power without any qualities or attributes? The assertion, moreover, that He willed the good, whether we mean that He resolved upon it in time or that His will is eternal and without beginning, only amounts to our saying that the good should be once and for all, and that this *should be* rests on an act of affirmation or on a positing which had no origin at all. Moreover, it is

clear that such an act is merely a display of power and so capable of investing the moral law with the character of necessity, but not with any moral worth at all. The other half of the anithesis is equally useless: that God wills the moral law because it is good in itself. Not only is this way of speaking presumptuous, but it must be pointed out that a spirit does not recognise a precept or body of precepts as being of this binding character, unless it already has for His nature the very truth and worth to be accorded to it by His assent thereto.

We may feel sure, therefore, that these alternatives cut asunder thoughts which have no meaning apart, and embody a single truth, and that we must needs fall into absurdities when we make one of them the condition of the other.

We must, therefore, pronounce as follows: God is nothing else than that will whose purport and mode of action can be conceived of in our reflection as that which is good in itself —as a will which can only be separated by abstraction from the living form in which it exists in the real God. But, in truth, it as little follows after, or precedes the Divine nature, as

in a movement direction can be later or earlier than velocity.

No Derogation of Moral Laws to Regard Them as Divine Will.

It is, therefore, a mistake to object that the true majesty of moral laws is infringed, if they be regarded as the will of God. We make this reflection, not with the purpose of establishing the dignity of those laws by showing where they came from, for their worth is immediately realised by us, so that they win our homage from the first; we make it, rather, because this worth or dignity of the moral law is not to be satisfactorily accounted for in any theory, and so demands some such reflections as the above, not, indeed, in order to be allowed and accepted, but simply in order to be understood and harmonised with the rest of our conception of the world.

XCI.

Man is Child of God,

We must not be rendered insensible by the somewhat sentimental terms in which the second proposition is couched to the importance of the truth it contains.

(1) as a Finite Being.

Its meaning is twofold. In the first place, it is an acknowledgment of the finite character and of the subjection of the per-

sonal spirit to the power and wisdom of God. And here we see the difference between Christianity and the prouder moral systems which pursue as their ideal the self-sufficiency and self-respect of the wise man. On the other hand, this truth fortifies us against that depreciation of personality which consists in regarding it as a passing product of the processes of nature. It asserts that there is a relation of piety between God and man, that this relation is ever a living one, and that through it alone the finite spirit ceases to be a mere dependent natural product.

(2) as a Being who is not merely a Natural Product.

And, in the place of mere self-satisfaction as the highest good, there comes the hope of being loved by God. And this approval by the supreme spirit takes the place of the pride which claims to find a sufficient good in self-esteem.

XCII.

As regards the third proposition, we have already seen that we do not know the purport and plan of the Divine government of the world. As a consequence of this, religion must exclude from its province all

Real World is the Kingdom of God.

natural philosophy and consideration of external reality. Science must be left to itself to frame its own methods, and religion must not interfere or try to influence its decisions.

This also distinguishes Christianity from other religions. The heathen religions have mythologies which give extensive explanations and interpretations of reality. The Christian religion has no cosmology of its own, and bases all its reflections on considerations of the spiritual world, of which we have an inner experience.

CHAPTER VIII.

DOGMAS AND CONFESSIONS.

XCIII.

MORE than these three tenets is not revealed by the Christian religion. To be penetrated by them, and to submit willingly to the Divine will, this is religion as a living faith, as a condition of the soul.

Religious Tenets Belong to Private Mysticism.

For all that, it is impossible to get rid of attempts to transform these felt convictions into a succession of formulated and communicable tenets. Experience of life drives men to make such attempts, when, instead of answering the doubts of others by trying to bring them into their own religious tone and temper, they confront them with ready-made convictions, specially dealing with the doubt in question. All such attempts we may term religious mysticism. They are exclusively based on our own inner religious experience and have no force but for,

and claim no acceptance but from, the personal subject alone, which seeks in the depths of its soul an answer to its doubts.

XCIV.

Still Religious Communion is Essential.

This first impulse generated a second. One is involved in contradictions if one tries to stand alone in religious convictions, in which, after all, we are bound up with the entire world. Religion is not only a union of the individual with God, but is through this union also a union with all other men.

This is the one respectable root of religious fanaticism. For, what we ourselves recognise as the highest would not be so, unless it were recognised as such by all. This does not really justify us in thrusting upon others our subjective beliefs, but, it does rightly engender in us all the need of a religious communion within which we may each find again, if not the fulness of our private beliefs and mystical knowledge, at least the outlines of convictions, which may be shared by all its members in common. And herein lies the necessity for dogmas and creeds of general recognition and force.

XCV.

Without doubt, the historical development of such thoughts will more fully represent the religious feelings than the experience of a single life; although anything which we have once experienced is thereby borne in upon our minds with a greater intensity than tenets merely inherited from the past can ever possess.

The Use of Religious Dogmas.

Universally received dogmas, therefore, have a double purpose. On the one hand, they embody solutions of doubts won in the course of the past. On the other hand, they are clear outlines of belief outside of which the fancy of the individual may not wander without falling into error.

Dogmas must not be made Tests.

Our earlier considerations showed that none of these dogmas must be regarded as a theoretically or scientifically sufficient answer to the questions before us; rather they are symbols acknowledging the existence of a riddle and marking out in a figurative and unsatisfactory manner the sphere of thought outside of which the elements of a solution must not even be looked for. Thus to us it would seem erroneous to demand agree-

ment with the literal contents of these dogmas from any one who would join a religious communion. Even in their literal form they cannot be objects of knowledge or the reverse. Before even a question of this can be raised they need some interpretation to be given of the meaning which in a figurative or symbolic way they express. But no interpretation can be given which would meet with general acceptance and appeal to all alike, but every individual must find it in the workings of his own soul.

Of one, therefore, who would belong to a particular communion, it should only be asked: does he feel and acknowledge in his inner nature a religious truth which can be entertained as the meaning of the objectively formulated dogma, and which deserves to be put forward as a public tenet?

XCVI.

May We Honestly Join a Communion whose Tenets in Order to do so We Must Interpret in Our Own Way?

It may be objected that there is a kind of dishonesty involved in so partial an assent to the tenets of one's communion. There would be, if we meant that the religion and its dogmas are only to be regarded as binding for the uneducated. But on the contrary we contend that religious

truth is absolutely valid for all alike, only that the theoretical expressions which men devise for it are altogether inadequate. And that is why it is permissible for a man to agree upon formulæ, bearing the same theoretical sense for all, through which he thinks that the essential meaning is best grasped and comprehended.

It is the same in other parts of our life. There, too, we often find ourselves obliged to look at the world in ways which we, from the standpoint of philosophy, know to be inadequate. The presence of a spacial world outside us, material atoms and forces—these are all ideas, without using which, not only the common, but the philosophic understanding which denies their validity would not be able to rightly observe and handle the external world. In all these cases we do not get at the truth, but only at a picture or figurative appearance, by means of which we can make clear to ourselves the true relations of the real world, which in themselves cannot be expressed.

In the same way it is of no consequence for religion that theoretically objectionable phrases should be provided to express what is in itself superfluous; it *is* important that we should have

picturesque or figurative expressions to which the spirit may attach the same feelings as appertain to the true content.

Historical Dogmas Need Recasting in Some Points.

Now, we must allow that we could only speak so simply as this, if these dogmatic formulæ were about to be established for the first time. But, in fact, we have them as a legacy of the past, and what is more, have them too often in a form which admits of a great deal of misunderstanding of their true sense. But that is no reason why we should, in a self-willed way, separate ourselves from the circles which recognise them; it only entails upon us that we should not erect these dogmas into objects of theoretical knowledge, and that we should, as a matter of honesty and concern for the spiritual well-being of others, combat the evil of a false interpretation of them.

XCVII.

The attempts at a theory fall into three parts, of which the first alone—theology in the narrower sense—is thoroughly accessible to philosophy.

In the foregoing we have tried to show, firstly, of what, in the way of a definite characterisation of the Divine being, philosophy admits; secondly,

what it rejects; lastly, what it insists upon, though unable to exhibit it adequately in theory. The general results of our investigations we may sum up thus: the belief in a personal God conflicts with none of the metaphysical convictions to which we must hold fast. On the other hand, there is nothing to be said for the views of those who, while rejecting all religious beliefs, in a facile manner swallow any kind of physical theories, and pretend that spiritual life arose out of the forces of mere matter. Lastly, the reproach of anthropomorphism is unjust, because the distinction between finite and infinite spirit is by no means overlooked. It is the height of perversity to set up as the principle of the world an unconscious and blind substrate, the idea of which is strictly dark and impenetrable to us.

Recapitulation of Results.

XCVIII.

Further speculations, for example, about the Trinity would have no importance for the religious life, except for their bearing on the position which, through the establishment or revelation of religion, the human race has assumed towards God. These

In what Sense can We Admit that Christ was Son of God,

form a second and large branch of religious theory. We have shown reasons for believing that God is ever active in the world and upon individual spirits, and as we admittedly know nothing about the plan after which God governs the world, there is nothing in the way of our believing that at particular moments and in particular persons God has stood nearer to humanity and revealed Himself more fully than in others.

When, therefore, as a title of honour, the founder of our religion is called the Son of God, no serious objection can be raised; we are certainly justified in holding that the relation in which He stood to God was not only different in degree to that in which we stand, but also unique in kind.

But no adequate expression can be found for that which we mean in this case. In a literal sense Christ cannot possibly be the Son of God; it is a figurative expression and admits of no literal interpretation. There is, therefore, no room in this case for a theoretical dogma, and in affirming that Christ is the Son of God, we merely express our conviction of the unique importance which Christ and His relation to God have for mankind; we cannot define either the one or the other.

XCIX.

Any one who impartially lets the teaching and history of Christ's life work upon his soul, without analysing the impression, cannot but feel that therein an infinitely valuable and unique act of healing has been performed for mankind. But to try to fix in rigid theory the exact value and import of the act is to take away from it rather than to add to it.

Or that He Redeemed the World?

We cannot say that the honour of God is wounded by man's sin and that it is satisfied by the sacrifice of an individual. Apart from the crude conception of God involved in this view, it rests on the impossible assumption of such a solidarity between all men that the blame and punishment of all can be thrown on one person, who can bear it for all.

The more human ideas of an expiation or redemption, the latter especially, leave it undecided from whom or what humanity is really set free by this ransom. It can hardly be God; it must therefore be the order of natural law which has bound up with our finite nature sin, and with sin, condemnation.

We know, however, that we are not freed

either from physical evil or from the possibility of sin. There remains therefore as the practical result of our redemption no more than the faith revealed, and that frees us from the fear and misgiving of the creature, so far as it teaches us that all our ills are a Divine probation, and also that our entire earthly life is neither meaningless nor an irrevocable last, but an epoch of preparation, of the sins committed during which we are by the Divine grace absolved in a manner which, as a matter of theory, we can not in the least define.

All further speculations than this about the origin of sin and its consequences are for the religious life utterly useless.

C.

What Eschatology is Allowable.

The third section of these speculations comprises what is called eschatology and admits not of any theoretical treatment. The earthly future of the human race, the manner of our immortality, and the requital which the world's assize will bring to each of us, these cannot be depicted in any concrete fashion. And indeed the humanity of this age has quite outgrown the old coarse imagery, and is content to retain the general idea of a con-

tinued life, in which we shall be gradually perfected, as well as receive some requital for the past. And this is good evidence that for a really religious life there is not wanted that intimate acquaintance with the future life to which a perverse and blundering dogmatic system pretended.

CI.

Visible and Invisible Church.

We pointed out above of what importance it is that in our religious convictions we should not stand alone. It is the more important, because the very gist and marrow of these convictions lies in the faith that all men are bound up with one another and with God in an eternal communion into which every one may enter of his own free will. This communion we call the invisible Church. The visible Church is only a human institution of the community of the faithful, partly for common worship, partly for the ordaining of their earthly affairs in accordance with the commands of their faith. Hence the folly of any Church which claims to be the only way of salvation, claims not only to teach and lead us along it, but to open or close it to us of its own power. For the rest,

the Church, like any other institution, should not stand in opposition to the State; though their proper relations to one another are scarcely well described by saying that the Church ought to be subject to the State in everything but certain unessential externals. On the contrary it is the misfortune of the present time, and a mere historical accident, that the State must exist without any religious foundation, and thinks that it does not want any.

But perfect unity of the State in religious as well as in secular matters presupposes that two parties, now inimical, should be reconciled to each other. Neither theological learning nor irreligious natural science should continue to assert that they both know so much that they do not and cannot know; in the recognition of Divine mysteries which are left to the interpretation of every single faithful soul and of general moral precepts—about which, indeed, there exists no controversy—religious life should develop according to this motto: *in necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus caritas.*

FINIS.

Note.—The above translation is made from the First Posthumous Edition of Lotze's Lectures.

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